006 IN UNKNOWN CHINA

[p.5]

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5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

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291
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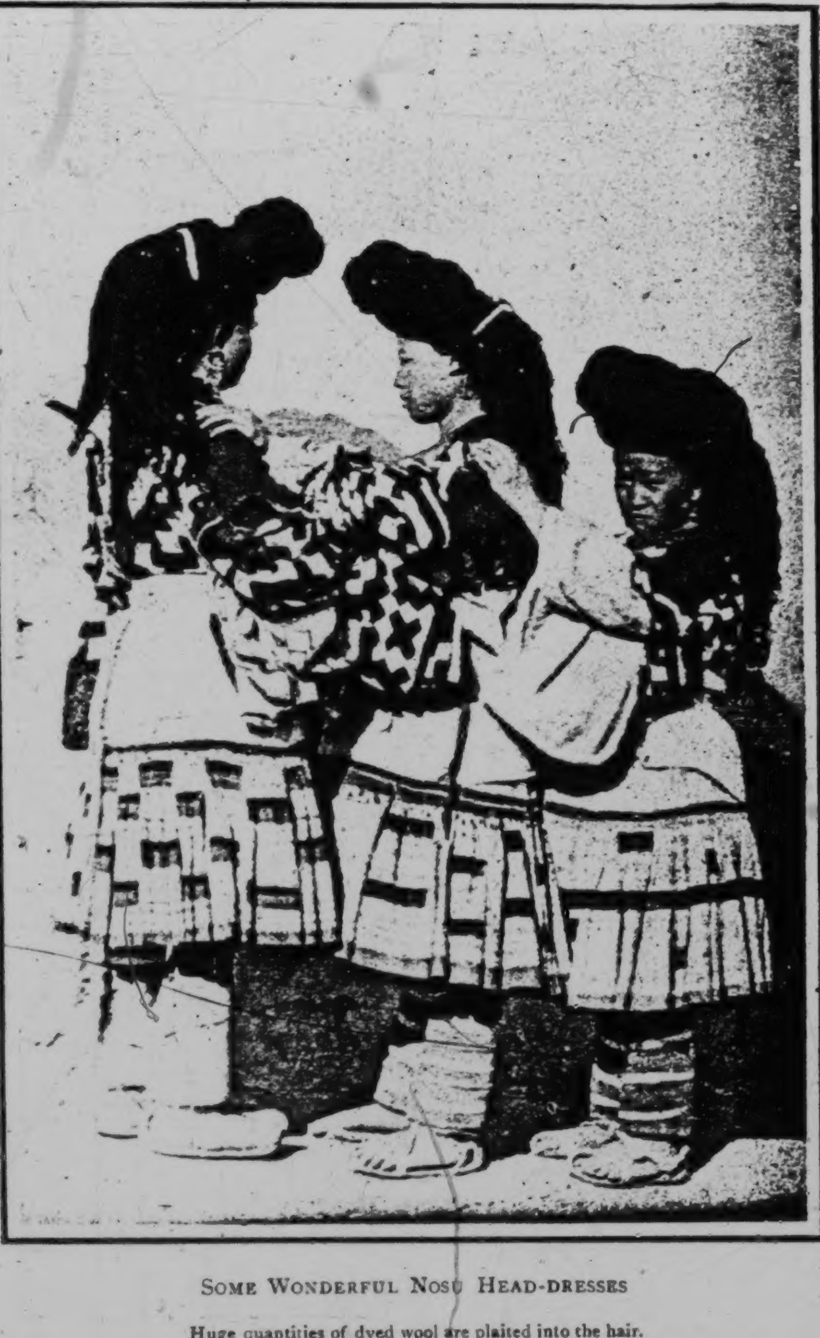

SOME WONDERFUL NOSU HEAD-DRESSES

Huge quantities of dyed wool are plaited into the hair.

IN UNKNOWN CHINA

000 A RECORD OF THE OBSERVATIONS, ADVENTURES AND EXPERIENCES OF A PIONEER MISSIONARY DURING A PROLONGED SOJOURN AMONGST THE WILD AND UNKNOWN NOSU TRIBE OF WESTERN CHINA

BY

S. POLLARD

AUTHOR OF "IN TIGHT CORNERS IN CHINA,"
"THE STORY OF THE MIAO," &c. &c.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS & THREE MAPS

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[p. 9]

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE
000 The Girl with the Coral Beads 17

CHAPTER II

The Yangtse in its real Home 25

CHAPTER III

The Secret of the White Towers 37

CHAPTER IV

The Aboriginaes of West China 50

CHAPTER V

Down to the Ferry 61

CHAPTER VI

Winning our First Game 71

CHAPTER VII

Lifting the Veil 80

CHAPTER VIII

The First Stop in Nosuland 88

CHAPTER IX

Marriage Proposals and the Water-Supply 96

CHAPTER X

Supper à la Nosu 105

[p. 10 is blank]

CHAPTER XI

PAGE
THE FARMSTEAD IN THE VALLEY 114

CHAPTER XII

FIRESIDE YARNS 126

CHAPTER XIII

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM 137

CHAPTER XIV

STORIES ABOUT EARTH EYES 146

CHAPTER XV

MORE ABOUT EARTH EYES 156

CHAPTER XVI

MORALITY OF THE ABORIGINALS 170

CHAPTER XVII

A TRIO OF MYSTERIES 180

CHAPTER XVIII

ON THE MARCH AGAIN 193

CHAPTER XIX

HOW WE STOPPED THE FIGHT 201

CHAPTER XX

RAPIDS AHEAD 210

CHAPTER XXI

MORE YARNS AND THE SOLITARY GIRL 219

CHAPTER XXII

THE FRIENDLY WIDOW'S HOME 229

CHAPTER XXIII

PAGE
HILL WARFARE AND STATE ROBES 237

CHAPTER XXIV

IN THE GRIP OF THE DEMON 248

CHAPTER XXV

THE WRITTEN LANGUAGE AND MANUSCRIPTS 256

CHAPTER XXVI

BACK INTO THE DANGER ZONE 267

CHAPTER XXVII

THE PLOT THAT FAILED 277

CHAPTER XXVIII

UP THE HILLS AND HOME AGAIN 288

CHAPTER XXIX

QUERY? CHINA'S HIDDEN MENACE 298

CHAPTER XXX

THE CANDID GENERAL AND THE CONCEITED ARTIST . . . 306

CHAPTER XXXI

A WREATH OF STONES AROUND CORAL BEADS 315

INDEX 321

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

000 SOME WONDERFUL NOSU HEAD-DRESSES . . . *Frontispiece*

MAIZE STACKED IN TREES 32

SHOEING A HORSE 32

GOOD EXAMPLE OF THE WHITE TOWERS 40

STOCKADE ON A HILL 56

A GROUP OF YOUNG ABORIGINALS 56

SWIFT WATERS OF THE UPPER YANGTSE 80

HOW THE HILLMEN FIGHT 112

AN ABORIGINAL VILLAGE 112

MOUNTAIN CASTLE OF EARTH EYE LO 144

AN EARTH EYE WIDOW 152

A NOSU AND HIS DAUGHTER 152

GROUP OF ABORIGINALS 176

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

PAGE 000

Hill Road in West China 200

A Bridge leading to Nosuland 200

Market Village on the Hills 216

Nosu Girls 232

Houses of Refuge 240

Nosu Armour 248

A Long Nosu Gun 248

Buildings roofed with Bark 264

An Underground River 280

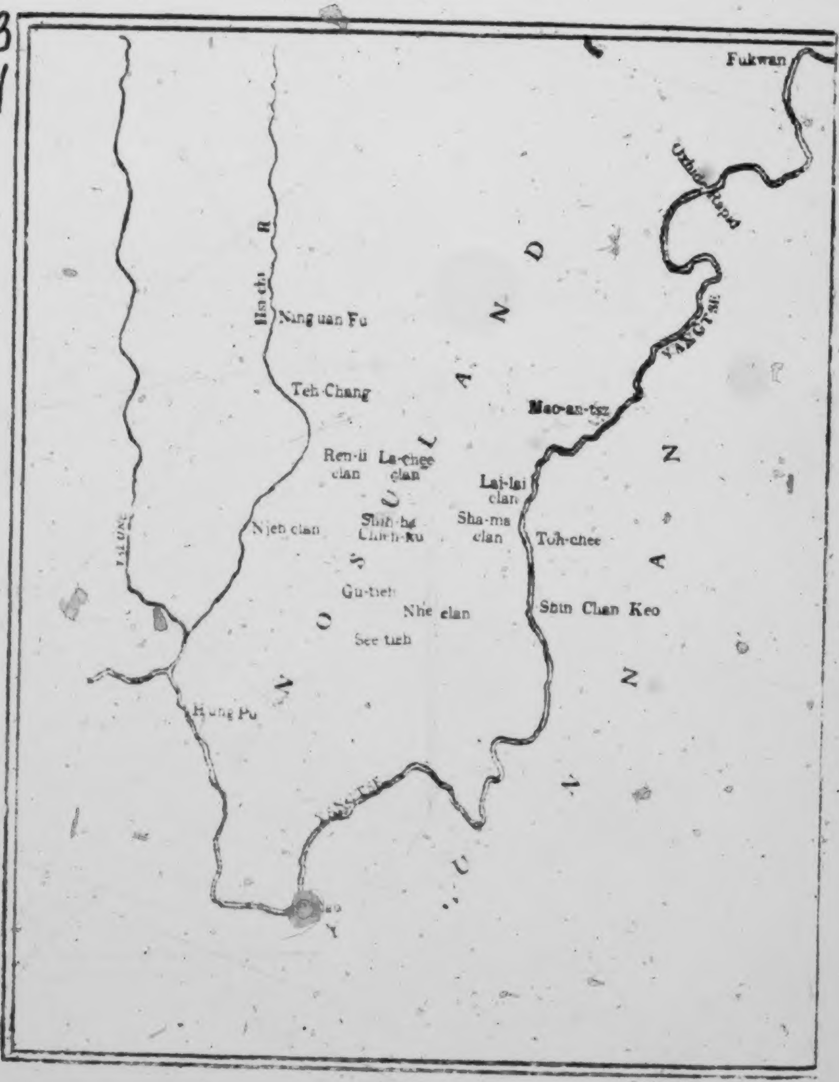
MAPS

Map of Nosuland 16

Map of the Yangtse Kiang 17

Map of China (General) 324

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4


Fukwan
Urbio Rapid
YANGTSE
Mao-an-tsz
Hsu chi R
Ning uan Fu
Teh-Chang
Ren-li clan
La-chee clan
Lai-lai clan
Njeh clan
Shih-ha Chien-ku
Sha-ma clan
Toh-chee
Gu-tieh
Nhe clan
Shin Chan Keo
See tieh
Hung Pu
YALUNG
YANGTSE
NOSULAND
YUNNAN

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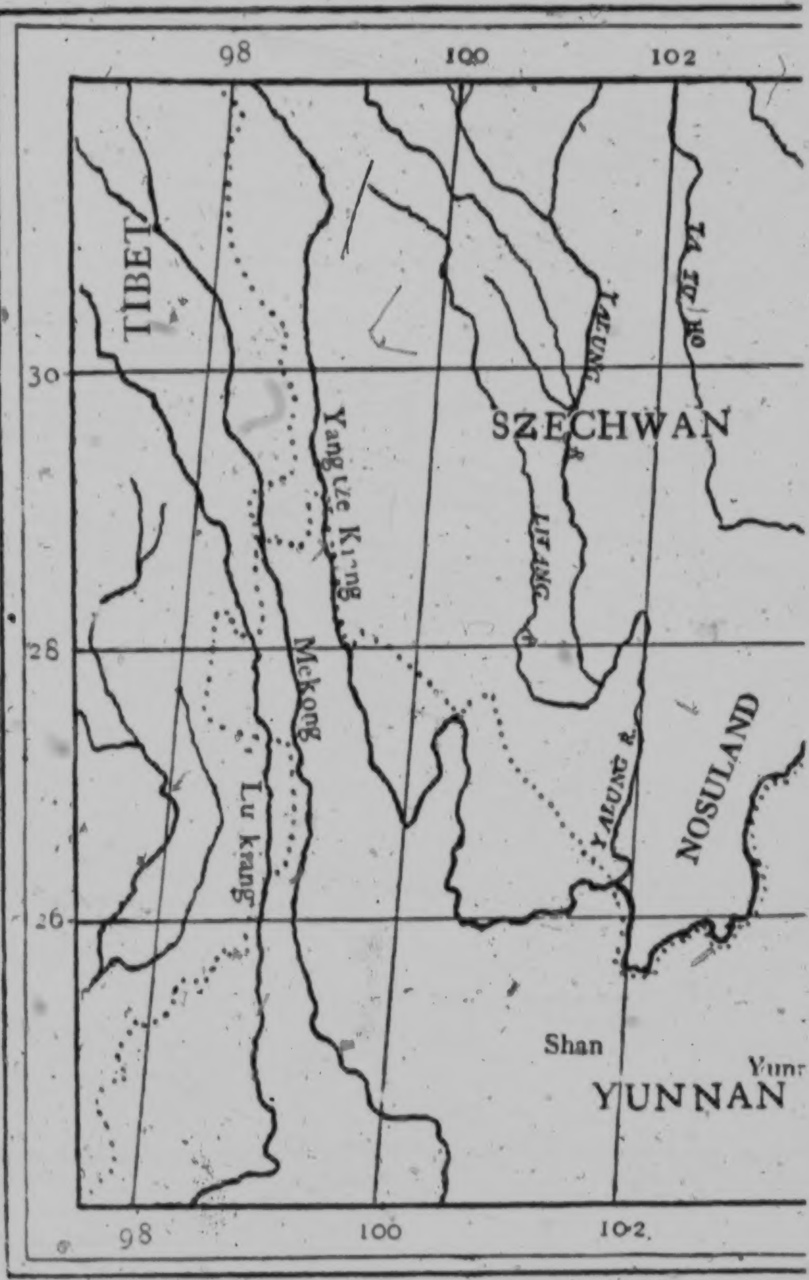
NOSULAND

The terms "Lolo" and "Mantsz" are sometimes erroneously ascribed to these people; they are in reality terms of contempt applied by the Chinese, and are never used to the people themselves if a quarrel is not sought.

The information in the above sketch map was supplied by the author, who was the first white man to have resided amongst these wild but hospitable people, whose country has never been surveyed.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4


98
100
102
TIBET
30
28
26
Yangtze Kiang
SZECHWAN
YALUNG
TA TU HO
LITANG
Mekong
Lu kiang
YALUNG R.
NOSULAND
Shan
YUNNAN
98
100
102

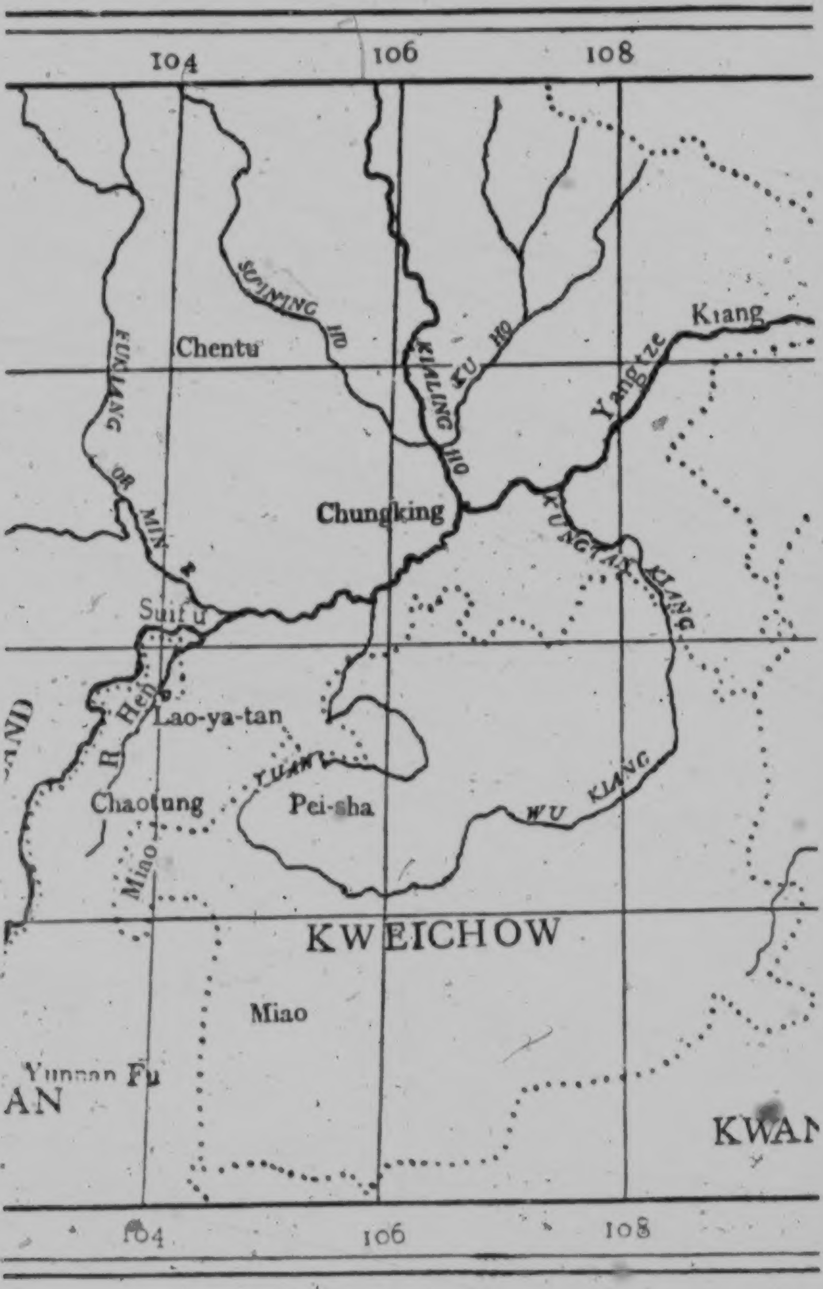
[Map facing p. 16]

[a.]

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

133

131


104
106
108
Chentu
SUINING HO
KIALING HO
KU HO
Yangtze Kiang
FU-KIANG OR MIN R
Chungking
KUNG TAN KIANG
Suifu
R Heng
Lao-ya-tan
YUAN
Pei-sha
WU KIANG
Chaotung
Miao
KWEICHOW
Miao
Yunnan Fu
AN
KWAN
104
106
108

The Yangtse Kiang its Tribut

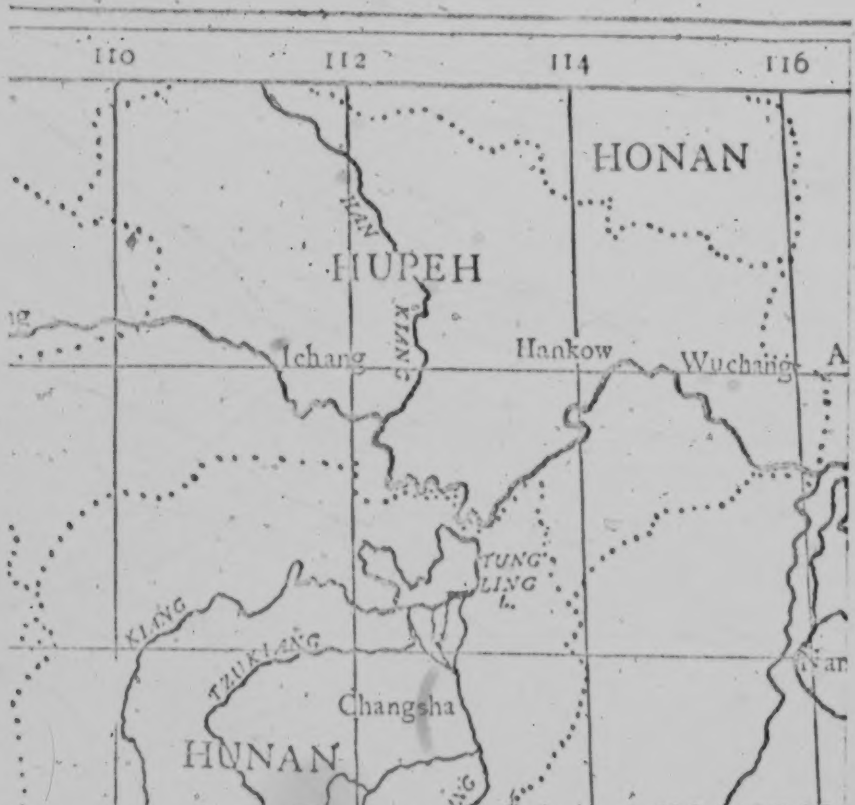
Nosuland lies between lat. 26

[Map facing p. 16 [6.]]

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

133

131



110
112
114
116
HONAN
HAN
HUPEH
KIANG
Ichang
Hankow
Wuchang
TUNG LING L.
KIANG
TZU KIANG
Changsha
HUNAN
SIANG KIANG
KIANGSI
HAN KIANG
ANGSI
110
112
114

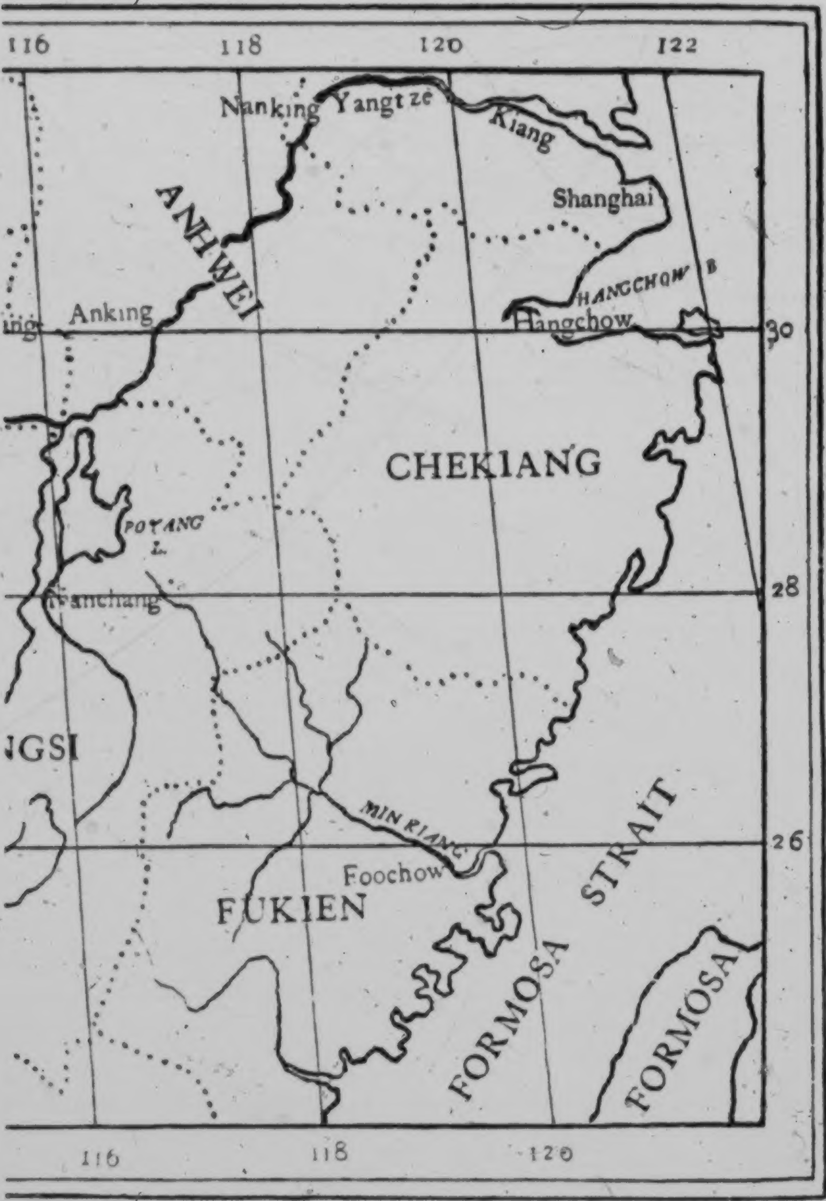
ibutaries and Bordering Provinces

26 and 28, and long. 102 and 104

[Map facing p. 16 [c.]]

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

133
131


116
118
120
122
Nanking
Yangtze
Kiang
Shanghai
ANHWEI
HANGCHOW B
Anking
Hangchow
30
CHEKIANG
POYANG L.
Nanchang
28
IGSI
MIN KIANG
26
Foochow
FUKIEN
FORMOSA STRAIT
FORMOSA
FORMOSA
116
118
120
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[Map facing p. 16 [d.]]

IN UNKNOWN CHINA

CHAPTER I

THE GIRL WITH THE CORAL BEADS

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SHE sat on the earth floor one side of the blazing wood fire, and I sat on a black bearskin on the other side of the same wood fire. Neither spoke a word to the other. She was a young girl of eighteen years of age, and was smoking a long pipe. From her ears hung strings of amber and coral beads, from eighteen inches to two feet long and every now and again she shaded her eyes from the blaze or smoke of the fire. Constant proximity to a smoky fire had evidently made her eyes somewhat sore. Now and again we glanced at each other, but as neither could speak the other's language, and we had only that day met, there was not much advance made towards friendship. As I was leaving again the next morning, it seemed very likely that we should slip out of each other's lives without even a word having passed between us. She would go her way as the daughter of a great Nosu chieftain, whose home was among the mighty hills of that independent land in Western China, which has never yet been conquered by the Chinese overlords. Perhaps now and again she would remember with faint interest the Englishman, who was the first European to penetrate into the mysterious land where she dwelt. But while we were blinking at the fire, and I

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000 was wondering why bearskins were not padded, and why they were almost as hard as the earth floor, others were plotting to bring the two who sat by the fire closer together.

In another part of the room squatted the brother of the girl with the long pipe and coral ear-rings, and the Nosu chief who had guided the Englishman into the heart of the country, where dwell the wild hillmen so dreaded by the Western Chinese. These two men were in deep conversation, and though it was all in a tongue foreign to me, I heard them several times use the words "Nhe Chah-Chah," and that being the name which the Nosu tribesmen had given to the stranger who had come among them, I knew that the conversation had some reference to me. I surmised that no harm was meant to the guest, for they smiled too pleasantly, and looked too good-tempered for persons who were plotting evil.

At last curiosity got the better of the Englishman, and he could wait no longer. He begged his friend the guide to tell him what was the subject of the earnest interesting conversation which the two were holding. Then Mr Long, my friend the Nosu chief, startled me by his story. When he had finished telling me what the two had been talking about, I began to wish I had never seen the house in which lived the young girl with the long pipe and the coral beads. These independent Nosu tribesmen had never before seen a European, and my guide who had come with me from Chinese territory south of the River Yangtse, where Europeans are frequently seen, had evidently been telling some tall stories about the stranger he had conducted into the heart of the great hill land. I do not fully know what yarns he told about me, but I know that he drew a long

: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

bow, and that he also drew heavy cheques upon his imagination in order to impress the tribesmen with the great importance of the Englishman, who appeared among them, as they termed it, "like a star from the heavens." When they saw I was not Chinese, and heard that our Englishwomen have natural feet, and wear skirts as do the Nosu women, and do not bind up their feet and wear trousers, as do the Chinese women, they took to me at once, and received me as a Nosu from the land of the distant sunset. They wished to go one step farther, and proposed that I should marry one of their girls, and settle down among them as chief of four of their tribes. The girl they had chosen for me to marry was the girl on the other side of the fire with the long pipe and coral ear-rings. My! Here was a pretty kettle of fish! I wondered what the girl thought as she listened to the animated conversation of the two chiefs squatting on the floor, and was curious enough to ask my friend. He told me that the girl was quite willing to carry out her share of the bargain. Indeed in the next few hours she seemed almost certain that the match would come off, and looked upon the Englishman as already her property. It apparently did not occur to her that anyone would refuse such an eligible offer.

The bearskin I was sitting on suddenly seemed to get very hot, and when I remembered it was almost impossible to escape from where I was back to the swift-flowing Yangtse, which was the outer barrier between me and the Chinese territory where I should be in safety, I began to feel very uncomfortable.

Rumours and even news fly apace in inland China. It used to be supposed that the interior of the great empire, 000 as it then was, never busied itself with what was happening on the coast or in the northern capital, but one's long residence in West China has convinced one that what happens on the coast is soon known in the remotest districts far from the telegraph. When China was fighting her disastrous war with Japan, in 1894, telegrams coming via Mengtse, the open port in South Yunnan, to the little town where I was then living, reported Chinese victories over their foes. These were evidently official reports sent out for the calming of the people, and the enhancing of the prestige of those in power. The people on the streets, however, had other news, and it was quite the opposite of the telegrams. The man on the street, two thousand miles from the scene of conflict, knew of the overwhelming disasters which had overtaken the troops of his country.

It was known, long before I attempted to cross the Yangtse and get into Nosuland, that the English missionary was contemplating this little adventure. The military official residing at Mi-tieh, who had charge of the Yangtse defences, heard of the proposed attempt and determined to stop it if possible. If he could not stop it he was determined that success on the traveller's part should be purchased at a terrible cost. The plans which years ago had succeeded so well with Margary were to be imitated with the Englishman who was going to try to lift the veil from independent Nosuland.

A messenger was sent beforehand to some of the chiefs, blackening the character of the Englishman and advising them to murder him should he succeed in reaching the interior of their land. Had this project been carried out the Chinese officials would at once have disclaimed all responsibility, and

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

would have contended that I had justly met my death, as a consequence of my rash adventure into the land of the hillmen, where the Chinese Imperial writ did not run, and where mandarins and their soldiers were rarely, if ever, seen. The plans of the "Defender of the Yangtse" were all so simple and apparently bound to succeed. The chief who was chosen to carry out the deed was named Vri-ha, and he came to meet us the first day we travelled in the land. We were warned on the way, before we met him, but determined to push on and take the risk. Possibly the Nosu chief might refuse to carry out the well-concocted and wilily-safe plans of the Chinese official, for these chiefs have no very great confidence in any Chinese. Our surmise turned out to be correct, and the only killing that Vri-ha did on our arrival was that of a fat goat for the entertainment of the guests who stayed under the roof of one of his country houses. The Nosu have a reputation for quickly changing their plans. One of the two men squatting on the floor earnestly discussing the marriage of the Englishman to the girl with the long pipe and coral ear-rings was Vri-ha. The potential murderer wished to become a relative by marriage, and had I scorned his proposal or treated it with contempt, my new friend might have become my enemy, and gone back to the plans of the wily defender of the Yangtse.

I was not anxious for such an outcome as that to my adventure. There was, however, no possibility of my accepting the proposal. I had already married one of the prettiest Englishwomen in the whole of China, and was not at all smitten with the idea of marrying an Asiatic, even though the advantages accruing from such a union might turn out to be very great. To be made chief of several of the hardy

000 Nosu tribes who have hitherto defied all the efforts of the Chinese to subdue them might open a romantic career to an adventurous West of England man who remembered how in the great sixteenth century his fellow-countrymen roamed all over the world, did great deeds, and laid the foundations of wide dominions. This, however, was the twentieth century, and not the sixteenth, and missionaries are not usually supposed to be given to filibustering or setting up as rulers of states, though romantic, restless, hot blood does flow in the veins of some of us. The man who imagines that a missionary has said good-bye to all romance, and is engaged in a tame, tasteless life's work, does not know the stories which some of the men in West China could tell.

My guide assured me that Vri-ha was in dead earnest, and that the coral-bead girl was willing also, and although he knew that a wife and three boys were waiting in my home a few days' journey away he would have been pleased if I had agreed to set up another matrimonial establishment in Nosuland. He himself had three wives and three separate establishments, and apparently saw no reason why I should not follow his example.

When night came on the hillmen from the neighbourhood gathered together to see the stranger and to discuss the meaning of his coming. The low-roofed house was well filled and the magic lantern I had brought with me was shown to a wondering audience. My guide did all the explaining of the pictures, and the wonderment the people showed was very marked indeed. I stood at the back, operating the lantern, and by-and-by the coral-bead girl with the long pipe joined me. What a shiver went down my back! And what a pity we could not talk to each other!

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

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The back of a magic lantern in a dark room is an admirable place for confidences. The girl was deeply interested in the English suit I was wearing. It was so unlike anything she had ever seen before, and possibly she thought that the possession of such a suit in her family would give her a position of great prominence among the leading ladies of Nosuland. She carefully examined my jacket and waistcoat and collar and necktie, and I had to submit as courteously as possible. I remembered Vri-ha, and the defender of the Yangtse, and was anxious to let the little girl down as gently as I could. Whatever happened there must be no row, and when I left their hills I wished to be remembered as a friend who would like to be welcomed on a second visit.

To the Chinese of Western China independent Nosuland is the great bogey land. Here dwell the wildmen, and legend has peopled those great hills with men who are hardly natural, and capable of doing all kinds of evil deeds. But to me the bogey land of the Western Chinese was like a fairyland I had long wished to explore. It did indeed seem as if the people were determined that it should be fairyland and looked upon the Englishman as a Prince Charming who was to marry the young daughter of one of their great chiefs. It was, however, a very poor Prince Charming I was prepared to be. I felt far more like stupid old Bottom in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* when Titania made such love to him.

It was winter-time and the snow was on the ground. Icicles were hanging down from the front of the house, and all outside was bitterly cold. In the morning when I went outside for a stroll I saw two men sitting on the ground, each covered with his long black felt cape. They were engaged in earnest conversation As I approached they turned and

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 saw me. One was Vri-ha and the other was my guide chief. The topic of conversation was again that of the Englishman and the girl with the long pipe and the coral beads. Here indeed was a dilemma for one to be faced with. The journey of adventure looked as if it were going to end in being a journey of disaster.

Talking to my guide, I asked him whether these hillmen would be willing to marry one of their daughters to a Chinaman. The answer came with a flash. "We would sooner marry her to a dog than to a Chinaman." The chief explained that this proposal of theirs was the highest honour they could possibly show to their guest, and he hoped that I would treat it as such and show my respect by agreeing to it.

I think I was hot enough to thaw all the icicles hanging down from the roof of the house. After all, my fairyland seemed to be perversely turning into bogey land and I wondered how it would all end.

CHAPTER II

THE YANGTSE IN ITS REAL HOME

THOSE who have only seen the River Yangtse in its ooo lower reaches, with warships and ocean steamers riding on its muddy waters, scarcely ever dream of what the river is like in the Far West, two thousand five hundred miles away from the ocean, where there is no trace of commercial bustle and where traffic is entirely absent.

The Yangtse, Ocean Son as its name means, from near Shanghai, where it mixes its waters with the China Sea, to Hankow, where it washes the suburbs of the three cities which make that point the most important in all interior China, is well known to Orient travellers. Back in the last century, in the halcyon days of the China tea trade, it was here where many of the famous clippers, after shipping a full cargo of the much-prized leaf, started on their race to London, making time which does not seem very slow even in these days of great ocean liners. So heavy is the traffic on this part of the Yangtse that it seems almost like an international waterway used by the mercantile navies of all the continents. From Hankow up to Ichang, merchant steamers and shallow-draught gunboats are constantly travelling up and down, and those who have visited Ichang imagine they have seen the upper reaches of the great river. It is a great but somewhat tame river which shows itself to such travellers. He who would learn the secrets and find out the history of the mighty waterway must force his way farther and farther inland, and

000 those who go farthest see and learn most. The lower reaches which come into touch with Western civilisation are but the outside doors of the great river, where ceremonial dress is put on for the reception of visitors. Those who have been into a Chinese mandarin's home have first gone through the outer gates, which are open to all and sundry, and then on through the big doors, on which are painted the immense door gods. These doors are opened for special guests and on special occasions. A little farther on, one comes to the guest hall, where are hung the long, graceful scrolls and where are the beautiful vases and lovely flowers. Seated in this hall one finds the mandarin wonderfully and charmingly polite, and he often gives the visitor a great time. At the end of an hour one leaves, feeling that he knows much about the inside of a mandarin's home. The truth, however, is, that he has only seen the outside and knows nothing at all about the real inner home, where live all the tragedy and intrigue and celestial comedy. On one occasion when visiting a mandarin's residence we were kept waiting for some time, and found out afterwards that the cause of the delay was that two prisoners might be taken out and executed before the mandarin came in and extended a most courteous and friendly welcome to his visitors from the West.

As with the mandarin's residence, so with the mighty Yangtse. Near Shanghai its great outer doors are contemptuously or carelessly left open to everybody. Farther inland its mile-wide gates at Hankow are open only to those ships which conform to certain patterns and regulations. Ninety-five per cent. of the steamers never pass through these doors, and the few that do pass and reach the Yangtse's guest hall at Ichang feel that they have explored the secrets of the

Ocean Son, whereas they have only just touched the fringe of the great river's history. They know its company manners, they know the dress of ceremonial it puts on for guests from across the water, but the Yangtse at home they have never seen. All the love and tragedy and intrigue and comedy are hidden away beyond Ichang, and the traveller that ventures farther gets a sudden rude awakening. On the lower reaches one can hoist the sails of his house-boat, and tack up and down, east and west, north and south, and feel as if he were on a wider Thames or long-drawn-out Mersey. In the warm days of early summer one can live the *dolce far niente* existence, careless of everything except a passing steamer with its crowded decks or an ugly warship of one of the great Powers on some diplomatic mission that puzzles the Chinese.

Beyond Ichang the house-boat soon gets into rougher waters, where tacking is impossible and where every minute almost brings its threatening danger. One finds out at once that the Yangtse in its inner home roars and foams and rages and tears, and takes frequent toll from those who wish to find out its hidden secrets.

Now for a whole month's journey the river keeps itself almost exclusively for those who live near its banks or make their home on its waters, and a jolly lively river it is. Nearly all the up-river boats fight their way up inch by inch, tugged along by hardy boatmen who know every foot of the way and sing songs in its praise as they pull their freight up against the stiff waters. Every now and again the river throws out a bold challenge, and, in the shape of a fierce rapid, shows its terrible teeth and dares anyone to proceed farther. The boatmen accept the challenge, and then comes a great fight. He who has looked on at one of these fights never forgets the

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great struggle. If he happens to have joined in and to have been worsted in the fight and to have only just escaped with broken boat and damaged goods, he will never think lightly of the great river again. If, like some of us, he has been wrecked and tossed into the raging waters of the wild rapids and only just escaped with his life, he will never forget the weird, hissing, triumphant song the angry, boisterous waves sang in his ears as he battled for life against a merciless enemy. And when, years after, far inland and away from the great Yangtse, he wakes at night and hears the rain beating on the roof and the hill torrent roaring in the gullies, he will hear once more that weird, hissing song and feel the quiver of the wings of that angry, merciless river demon. Ugh! it is nearly thirty years since he shook and tossed and bit me and I can feel him even now. The merciless brute! The roar of the river will ring in the ears of some of us till the day of the crossing of the great last river.

Constant practice and years of negotiation have made the boatmen almost careless of the great rapids, and what at first looks like fierce grinning teeth seems but a big explosion of laughter to those who have often pulled their way through the dashing waters to the calm reaches above, where, if the breezes are favourable, the big white sail will sweep the boat along and give all the hard-working crew a much-enjoyed rest. Those who turn coward at the raging, angry rapids know nothing of the smooth waters beyond.

When, at the end of a hard month's journey against the stream, the house-boat reaches the great trading port of Chungking, which is built on the face of a huge rock, one may imagine that now he knows the Yangtse and has seen the great river in all its moods. But the secret still lies in the distant beyond. Away back and back lies the real Yangtse. Up till now one has only seen a huge water road, travelled over by myriads of trading junks, many merchant steamers and a few ugly war vessels. At Chungking one finds very little evidence of steamboats. What evidence there is to those who know speaks eloquently of two men who rank among the great pioneers of Western civilisation in inland China. One of these men, Captain Plant, is still working hard and successfully at the problem of the steam navigation of the Upper Yangtse, the other, Mr Archibald Little, died a few years ago, after a strenuous life spent in working in and for China. He was the great pioneer of the steam navigation of the Upper Yangtse, and was the first to bring a small steamer right up to the walls of Chungking. Some of us remember gratefully that we knew this brave, kind, great man who so unselfishly worked to bring China and the West together as friends and not enemies.

But leave Chungking alone. Forget those little, almost impudent gunboats which hold up the flags of several nations before the gaze of the busy farmers and traders of the richest province of all China, and one of the finest countries in the whole world. Do not fancy you have yet seen the real Yangtse. Press on still farther. The greatest mysteries of all lie towards the sunset, and he who would speak to the heart of the mighty river must diligently resist the temptation to stop, and keep on crying: Westward Ho! The houseboats and junks push their way up river for a few weeks more, and in the summer-time, when the waters are swollen high, the perky little gunboats fly their flags a few hundred miles farther west, and give the natives the opportunity of thinking that the vaunted navies of England and Germany are com-

OOO posed of little boats half the size of some of their huge salt junks and drawing only three or four feet of water. No wonder they are never much impressed in these inland provinces with the naval power of the great Western nations.

Now you must go slowly, for you are approaching the real home of the great river, and are getting near the heart, where the secrets are kept closely hidden from all but the closest friends and the mighty hills and the eternal skies.

Away up, two days beyond the farthest point, where the most daring and skilfully navigated of these little Western gunboats have been, twenty miles west of the little town of Fukwan, which from its home in the province of Yunnan faces the big sister province of Szechuan, an enormous rapid, the Oxhide Rapid, stops all junk traffic, and the merry songs of the hard-working boatmen stop here. Reaching this place is almost like reaching the death point of a mighty industry. A few small boats manage to crawl on five miles farther to Mao Shui Kong—the Hole where the Water rushes out—but this represents the last feeble efforts of the great boat traffic to conquer the waters of the mighty river. Beyond this the Yangtse is supreme in its own home, and has time to tell its own story and reveal its hidden secrets. He who has never seen the river except where it is the busy highway of an ever-increasing commerce knows no more of its real life and beauty than does the tourist who motors along at forty miles an hour know of the life of the country-side on either side of his long trail of dust. He only hears the silent song of mountain and lake who goes slowly, rests frequently and knows how to keep very still. The song of China's wonderful mighty river is only heard when one has got right away from busy commerce and noisy marts and ships that spit out black

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smoke and cast hot ashes into the bosom of the cool waters.

Thus far it has been a long, tedious journey, but the traveller is now well repaid for his months of toil. Here is the Yangtse in its own glory, the great river in its native element, the River of the Golden Sand. The people who now look on its waters are not those who, travelling on junks from one province to another, are anxious most of all to leave as long a stretch of waters behind them as possible, but those whose first sleeps were coaxed by the songs of the stream that a few days before was gliding along on the roof of the world away up among the eternal snows, where the sun and the snow are such friends that they can for ever live in peace together.

Just near where the junk traffic finally ceases a rock juts out into one of the dangerous rapids. A lot of splendid fish are caught at this point, and the men who live in the vicinity know the advantages of the place for fishing. There is not room, however, for more than one fisher at a time, and if he has a struggle with a twenty-pounder, which he not infrequently has, he is liable to follow the fish into its rough elements, thus causing a complete turn of the tables. To prevent such a calamity the fisher is tied by a rope to the shore, and near by the anchorage a stick of incense is constantly burning. This is not in honour of Wang-ye, the great river god of West China, but is the fisherman's time mark. Each man can stay on the point as long as one stick of incense burns. When it has burnt away a fresh fisherman tries his luck, while a new stick of incense is gradually being consumed.

There being no up-river boats now the traveller has to follow the Yangtse by means of the narrow paths on its banks.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

[Plates facing p. 32]

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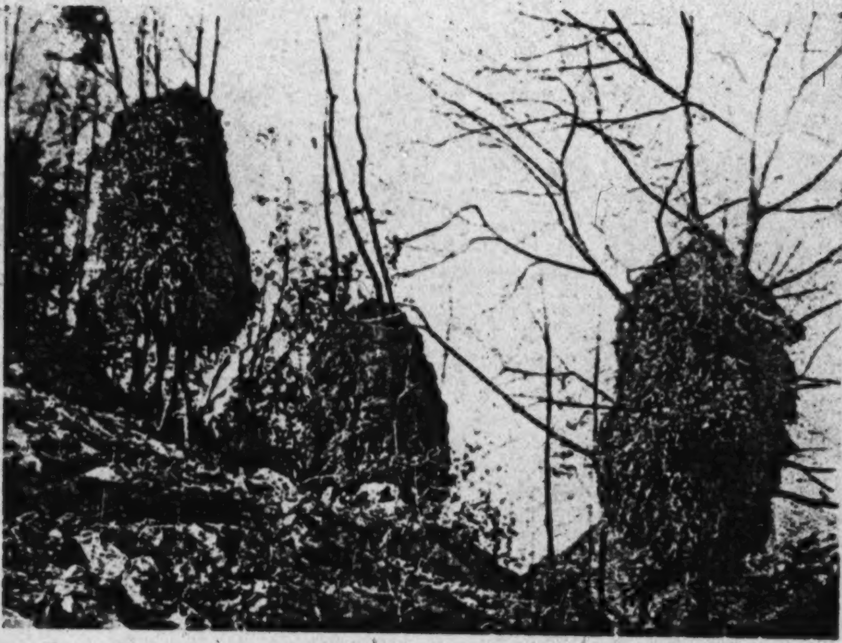

Maize Stacked in Trees to Preserve it from Damp and Straying Cattle

Shoeing a Horse in the Bed of a River

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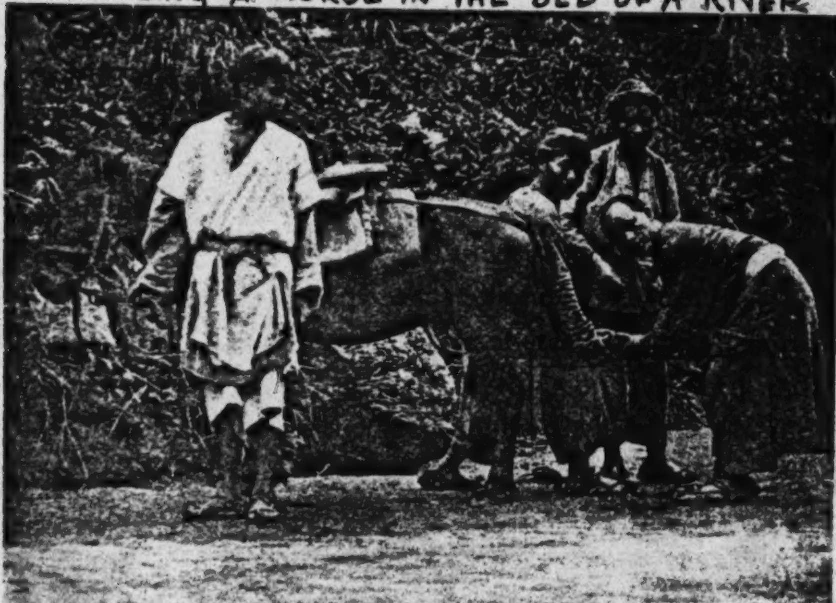

Shoeing a Horse in the Bed of a River

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 Sometimes the road lies on the right bank and sometimes on the left. Every now and again there are ferry boats which cross the stream, and in a few places where there are some miles of fairly smooth waters small boats ply up and down, carrying coolies and travellers at a very reasonable rate. Many years ago one of the great roads of West China followed up the banks of the river to a point west of the city of Chaotung, which is the principal city in the north of the province of Yunnan. In those days some of the worst of the rapids had not yet been formed, and the Government convoys of copper, product of the many rich mines of Yunnan and intended for the use of the Central Government in Peking, were all sent this way. Trade was better in those days than it is now. After the formation of several dangerous rapids the Government copper was no longer sent to the upper reaches of the river but was carried to the Yangtse via the busy customs station at Lao-ya-tan, and the River Hen, which as a tributary joins the main river twenty miles west of the busytown of Suifu. When the copper traffic took this new direction the old roads fell into disuse and some of them are now quite dangerous to travel over.

On one occasion after we had passed over some moorland which reminded one vividly of the Dartmoor of Devonshire, we came to a cliff around which the road went. As we were passing along right by the centre of the cliff the men with us called our attention to the fact that we were on the "Fairy Bridge." Looking down beneath us, we noticed that under our feet we could see the sheer cliff going right down to the bed of the river. Some supports had been driven into the cliff, and the road was very roughly built over these supports. How long these will hold up the roadway in a land where the

000 works of the great Chinese roadmakers of dynasties that have passed and gone have fallen into terrible decay one does not know. One was glad to leave Fairy Bridge behind and to reach firmer if not so romantic ground. The Chinese who were travelling with us said that the road bridge could never have been built there by mortals. Only the good fairies could have completed such an engineering feat, and hence the name of the bridge. Not long after passing Fairy Bridge we came to Little Danger and Great Danger, names given to two very risky pieces of road which we had to pass over. Both were built in the side of a cliff, and consisted of narrow steps, with no outside railings or support. A slip or a puff of stormy wind and the unwary traveller is over and into the merciless waters of the great river.

One missed the boats and the cheery song of the toiling boatmen. Except for the roar of the waters, all was as quiet as an ordinary country-side. The river had all the song to itself, and now and again it was full band and chorus. Passing by one of the many Shin Tans (New Rapids) which the river possesses, one had to stand and marvel at the great waters beating against the rocks in midstream. The white horses and the lovely foam crested the huge waves as I have often seen them crest the waves which have dashed against Cape Cornwall near Land's End; and beyond the roaring breakers the treacherous whirlpools, which twist and turn as if moving in harmony with the maddest of giant dancers. One can never imagine boats trying to negotiate those waters. And yet there are men who have gone down over these wild billows and have lived to tell their thrilling experience.

In many places along by the river-side building wood is very difficult to procure. Farther up river, however, forest

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 land is more plentiful, and planks and beams are cheap. These planks and beams are bound together into strong rafts, and an attempt is made to take them down over the dangerous rapids to the profitable markets lower down river. A Chinaman will risk almost anything for money, and there are some who now and again face these wild waters of the Upper Yangtse.

The raft is allowed to drift most of the way, the adventurous travellers doing nothing to assist it along. Here and there iron rings are driven into the planks, and when nearing the dangerous parts the men lie down, thrust their arms through the rings, and in this position go right through the waters overwhelmed by the great billows again and again. The greatest danger feared by the raft travellers is when the raft approaches a cliff, and instead of being swept on by the swaying waters the head of it is sucked under and the stern of the raft is thrown up against the cliff. When this happens the men on the raft are spoken of as being stuck on the cliff like scrolls are pasted on the door-posts at the New Year time. The danger of becoming a New Year's scroll is the danger most dreaded by these hazardous voyagers.

On and on one goes up the river bank, every now and again forgetting the Yangtse in the beauty of the oil-tree orchards by the water-side. It was autumn when I first went that way, and wending our way among the oil-trees was like passing through some of the beautiful old orchards of Somersetshire. The western sun shone through the green, yellow and bright red leaves of the oil and mulberry trees, and the effect was enchanting. It was like being in fairyland, and not far away the waters sang their songs as gently as moved the shimmering autumn leaves of the orchard trees.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

So the days passed by, and slowly we made our way up the valley of the Yangtse at about twenty miles a day. The last ride we had on its waters was one of seven miles, to a little town on the southern bank named Rim of the Iron Pan, so named from a great rapid close by, which to a Chinaman looks like a gigantic cooking-pan. The boatman charged us thirty-six cash each person, about a halfpenny, and there were forty of us on the small boat. The boatman told us that before he could make any money for himself he had to pay two hundred thousand cash a year to the small official who had the monopoly of the traffic. 000

After this our journey lay on the south bank of the river. Climbing up some great moorlands to escape a long bend in the river, we saw a new striking feature in the landscape which aroused our keenest interest.

On the other side of the river we noticed a great white cliff, and were told that it was a cliff of gypsum, great quantities of which are mined and sold all over the neighbouring district. The principal use it is put to is to curdle a white cream made by grinding soy beans with water in the little hand-mills which every Chinese country home in West China possesses. The gypsum acts like rennet, and when the soy bean cream is being boiled the whey is soon separated from the curd, and in this way is produced the "teofu," which is one of the most sustaining foods the Chinese eat, and which largely makes up for their lack of meat diet. Above the gypsum cliff stretched out a well-cultivated upland, and above that still another. The sun was shining beautifully, and we looked long at these uplands, deeply interested in the new feature we saw there. Here and there were high white towers shining clearly in the sunshine and making a striking contrast to the

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 dull khaki earth-coloured houses all about. We counted thirty-six of these towers on the two uplands, and later on, in the southern side, we counted sixty-four more such towers. When we counted the sixty-four the weather was not very clear. Had the sun been shining we could have seen a hundred. What is the meaning of all these white blockhouse towers?

CHAPTER III

THE SECRET OF THE WHITE TOWERS

THE white towers dotted all over the country-side 000 mean danger. The district is a borderland district, and there is the constant fear of sudden raids, with their attendant burnings and murders and captures for slavery. If you ask the owners of these towers why they have built them they will invariably answer: "Fear of the Mantsz." The dread of the Mantsz exists all over the countryside, and extends into three provinces. The word "Mantsz" means wildmen, and one wonders at once who these wildmen are, who can so terrorise an enormous district and incidentally alter the architectural appearance of great parts of three provinces. You ask again where is the home of these wildmen, and with protruding chin or pointing finger your informant directs you to the hills north of the Yangtse, right opposite to where you are standing and asking the question.

The hills on that side of the great river look very similar to the hills on this side. The geological formation is precisely the same. Why should there be wildmen on one side of the river and civilised Chinese on the other?

If you understand the language spoken by the people you can easily get the owners of the white towers to talk by the hour about the Mantsz, and blood-curdling are many of the stories. For generations and even centuries there has been constant warfare between the wildmen among the hills north

000 of the Yangtse and the Chinese who have settled near the home of these hardy raiders.

101 Here one comes right up against one of the most interesting secrets of interior China. Right in the heart of the land governed from Peking, by means of the provincial officials, is a large tract of country as big as some of the European states, where dwells a race of people practically independent. In the land of this race the Chinaman takes a very secondary place, and while in his own district and in the company of people who share his views he may express supreme contempt for these hillmen, calling them Mantsz and Lolo, terms which are abomination to the men referred to, if he enters the district where these despised people live he behaves himself admirably and uses far more respectful terms when addressing them. He knows that the use of the terms Mantsz and Lolo to the face of these people in their own land would probably lead to a great quarrel, with danger of fatal consequences. I have seen these hill people flare up with great anger at the bare mention of these much-resented terms.

[648] It is a great surprise to meet, right in the heart of China, a large district where the people live independently, keep their own customs, govern themselves, look on the Chinese as an inferior race, and only pay a nominal tribute to the Central Government, that from Peking rules over the Eighteen Provinces.

563 The Chinese who enter this hill land for trade or agriculture behave themselves far more circumspectly than they do in the foreign settlements of Shanghai or Hankow, or even in the British Crown Colony of Hong-Kong. In these latter places they still hold their own as the great race of the East, and while the European now and again treats the Chinaman

as a yellow man, yet the latter has made himself indispensable and knows how to become wealthy and powerful. 563 But in the land of the Mantsz the Chinaman becomes humble, and every now and again is read a lesson in manners by those who really rule in this independent land. Needless to say that he does not relish this, but he pockets his pride, and keeps on with his money-making.

In the presence of the mysterious, the Chinese are nonplussed. They may not be so religious in character as the peoples of India, but they are deeply superstitious and afraid of the unknown. To them the land where the wildmen dwell is the land of the unknown, and they live in constant dread of it. Many are the stories spread abroad of the mysterious land and its people. The wizards who live among the hillmen are credited with supernatural powers, and the Chinese are always ready to give a wide berth to anyone who can tap the limitless powers of the unseen spirit world.

Without warning, the hillmen will burst forth and make 721 a raid on the wealthier Chinese villages and farmsteads. They come with great swiftness, strike, rob, burn, take captive without any hesitation, and in a very few days are back again into their highland homes, safe from pursuit. The raiders cross the Yangtse in small boats at some safe point, and the boats are made inland, far from the gaze of the Chinese who live on the south bank of the river.

It is to the benefit of the hillmen to keep up the feeling of terror which the Chinese have of them. Only in this way can they keep their land safe. Gold and other precious metals, the value of which is well known to the Chinese, are reported to exist in large quantities, and it is a wonder that long ago the more numerous race has not gone in and subdued the people.

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721 The hillman keeps up his reputation for ruthlessness and fierce savagery by these sudden and murderous raids. By not making them too frequent, the Chinese officials have been kept from making really earnest attempts to conquer, once for all, this almost independent country right in the heart of their possessions. After each raid the mandarins make preparations for another raid, which does not immediately come off. In addition to military preparations, the old-time much-used practice of buying off an enemy is brought
648 into play. Subsidies are paid to the heads of the wildmen
721 to keep them quiet. Thus there is the peculiarity of these hill tribes sending tribute to the Central Government, while the officials representing that Government pay an even larger subsidy or tribute to the same people. In this strange book-keeping, the balance is usually on the side of the hillmen. After a while, however, the vigilance of the officials relaxes, and as all seems quiet these representatives of the Government think there is no necessity to pay all the sums sent them from headquarters, and so subsidies become irregular. This does not suit the hillmen, who know only too well how to alter this state of affairs. Their action corresponds to the
[567] mutiny of Chinese soldiers whose pay is in arrears. A new raid takes place, and by sudden swift action some unsuspecting inland village is ruthlessly destroyed and some of the captives are in the land of slavery before the inert, careless, covetous officials can move. Then the old programme is begun all over again.

721 Knowing that they are never absolutely free from the fear of these disastrous raids, the people have taken steps for their own protection. The many limestone caves abounding in the north of the province of Yunnan, are kept in a more or

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[Plate facing p. 40]

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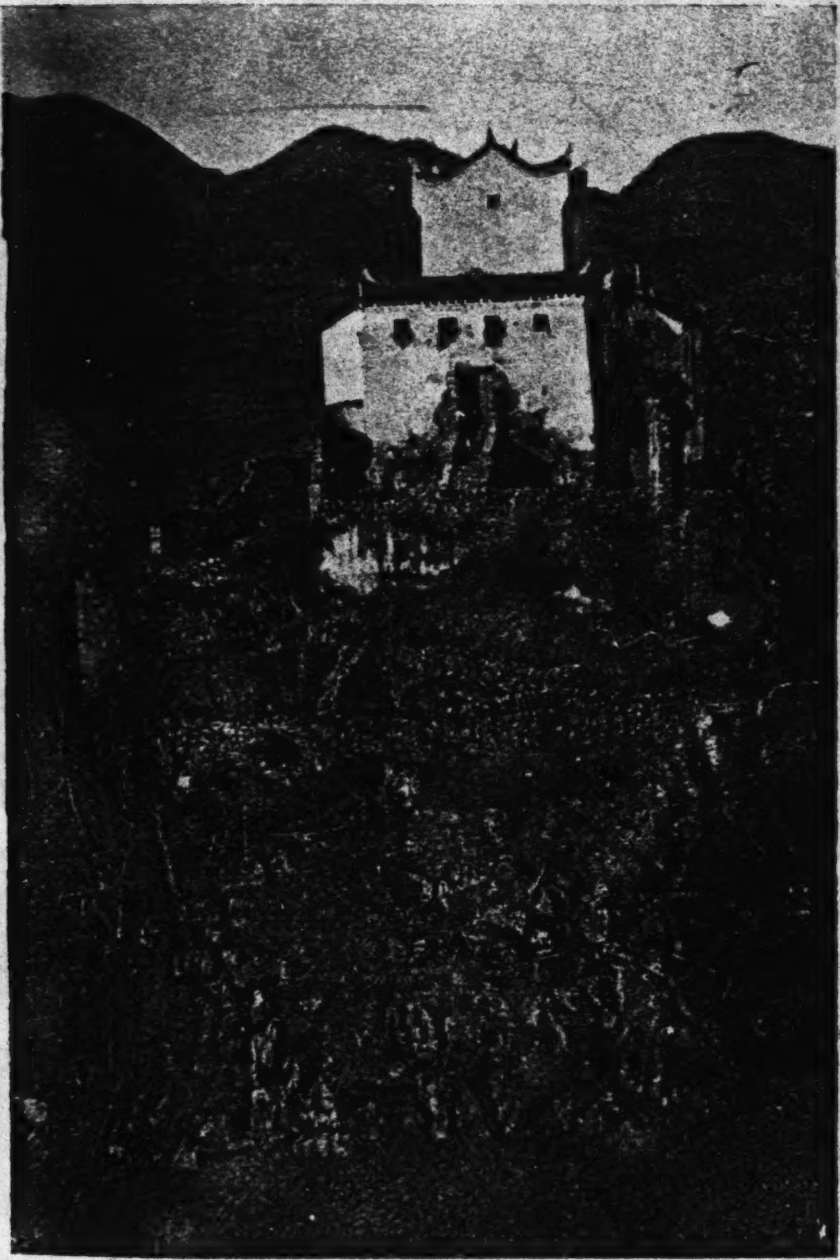

A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THE WHITE TOWERS BUILT FOR DEFENCE

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721 less fortified condition. Ramparts are built on almost inaccessible heights, and more common still, the white towers are erected everywhere. There are thousands of these towers in the country which is exposed to the raids of these hillmen. Some are strongly built of cut stone, others are merely built of earth, just like the adobe buildings that used to be so common on the farmsteads of the west of England. But all are admirably adapted to resist a sudden raid by men who dare not stay long about their nefarious business. The height of the white towers varies from forty-five to seventy-five feet. The base is about twenty to twenty-five feet square, or, in a few cases, even more than that. The walls are often as much as three feet thick. An archway like a small Chinese city gate leads into the tower, and this is closed by a strong door, well secured on the inside. The towers are divided into four or five stories, and in times of peace serve as granaries for storing the produce of the farms. A large supply of stones is kept in the upper stories to repel any who would attempt to fire the door, and so gain entrance that way. Spears, tridents, old-fashioned guns and even modern rifles are stored up in case of attack. Often the tower is built adjoining the living house, with a small entrance from one of the rooms. In case of alarm the wives and daughters, with such valuables as they can seize at such short notice, escape to the upper stories of the tower, while the men fight to keep their home intact.

Occasionally the tower and adjacent houses are surrounded by a strongly built wall with a moat outside, reminding one very forcibly of the old baronial keeps. The walls of the towers are often battlemented like Chinese city walls.

The secret of the white towers, then, is fear of the tribes-

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

72| people who live an almost independent existence among the great hills north of the Yangtse. Nominally they owe allegiance to the Central Government of China, but in reality they enjoy the completest form of home rule.

After our discovery of the white towers we continued to follow the river up for some days, meeting similar towers with great frequency. Day after day we looked across at the land where dwell the so-called Mantsz, the wildmen, and as we did so we wished much to get into that land and lift the veil off one of the remaining mysteries of inland China. The ferries, however, were guarded, and for some time no chance opened out for us. At night all the ferry-boats are drawn up on the Chinese bank, so as to prevent the hillmen using the boats for any midnight raid. Apparently the hillmen sleep in peace, never dreaming that the Chinese could cross in these same boats and serve their homes as they have so often served the Chinese homes and farms.

3// There is a great contrast in the cultivation on the two sides of the river. On the southern side, where the Chinese dwell, the country is like one great, well-cultivated garden, where cotton, sugar-cane, rice, maize, sweet potatoes, monkey nuts, oranges, pomegranates, persimmons, etc., etc., produce bountiful crops. Just across the river, which is often less than a hundred yards wide, in the land which would produce similar crops in equally rich profusion, we saw very few signs of cultivation. Most of the land was neglected jungle. It is a constant eyesore to the Chinese, who before everything else are farmers and who long for the opportunity of extracting from the neglected land the riches it is so willing to give to those who treat it patiently and kindly. A garden on one side of the river and a desert on the other, the soil the same

in each case. Some day in the land where these hillmen live 311
there will be a great outlet for the surplus population of the neighbouring provinces, but that day as yet seems a long way off.

One day, while still following the river and looking with OOC
longing eyes at the unknown land on the other side, we came to the Hill of Slippery Sand, and found the worst piece of land I had ever travelled over, in nearly twenty years of life in West China. The place has a fearful reputation, and the man who has been over the Hill of Slippery Sand talks about it to the end of his days. The road winds in and out around the face of a long, high cliff, and is sometimes less than a foot in width. There is a sheer cut down to the roaring waters below, and there is no outside protection to the road at all. As one walks or crawls along, the cliff seems to press over and to lean on to one, as if it were some recruiting demon in league with the treacherous waters below, trying to force one into the deeps and destruction. Here and there the road is a little wider, and one can sit down and rest in safety. Different parts of the road are named after the various stations in the Chinese Temple of Hades, and a knowledge of these names did not add to one's feeling of comfort. The King of Hell's Slide, The Gate of Hell, The Last Look at Home, The Place where even the Soul is Lost—these are some of the names given to points on the road over the Hill of Slippery Sand. At one point, about half-way across, someone had built a small shrine, and here used to sit an old woman selling oatmeal. In the Chinese Temple of Hades, after all the many torture chambers have been gone through, the adventurous lost soul approaches the gate of transmigration, and prepares for his re-entrance into the world.

300 At this gate sits an old woman, selling the "Broth of Oblivion," the Chinese equivalent of the Waters of Lethe. When the soul has drunk of this broth it forgets all about its former existence, and all about its many adventures in Hades, and goes with a clean memory slate into the world once more.

The travellers over the Hill of Slippery Sand dubbed the old lady who sold the oatmeal "The Lady in charge of the Broth of Oblivion." When travellers reached this spot it is said that they promptly sat down and repented of ninety-five per cent. of all their evil deeds and sins, so that the good spirits might come and help them over the rest of the dangerous path.

When we were near this conscience-awakening spot some travellers told me some stories to keep up our pluck. One of the stories was this: A family was crossing this Hill of Slippery Sand. In front walked the boy of twelve. Next came the mother, carrying the baby on her back, in the usual convenient way. Last of all came the father, bearing some goods. The boy slipped and fell over. The mother shrieked in terror, lost her balance and followed the boy. Fright struck the father likewise, and he also fell into the raging billows. The whole family was gone in a few seconds.

Those who are used to the road go over it as if it were nothing at all unusual. Long before I reached the end of the cliff road my legs were shaking, my heart was beating loudly and I had to strain all nerves to keep at all steady. One of my coolies, who carried my bedding and other things, in two baskets slung from the ends of a pole over his shoulder, went across as if it were great fun, and at the end said: "I have

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

for long wished to meet and conquer this much-talked-of 000
Hill of Slippery Sand."

A few miles beyond this dangerous spot we came to the "Plain of the Great Well," where is a small market town frequented by the men from the hills on the other side of the river. We stayed there a couple of days, and as one of these was market day we saw quite a number of the men the fear of whom has been the cause of building all the white towers. A friend persuaded four of these men to face the camera, but before I got the picture they fled from the foreigner's new kind of gun, which, for all they knew, might possess wonderful powers of bewitching. Later on another group was coaxed in, and these stood the ordeal manfully, but not without a good bit of fear and trembling.

The afternoon of the second day we went down with 101
several of these men to the ferry-boat and wished that we could go across with them. We found out that Chinese who wish to speak fairly respectfully of these hillmen call them Babu, which term may be a corruption of two Chinese words meaning "hill climbers." The Babus of West China have no affinity whatever with the Babus of Bengal. One would like to be quite sure of the origin of the word as applied to the hillmen. To this term the tribesmen make no special objection, though it is by no means a name of their own choice. Some Babu men came down to meet the boat on the other side, and as two clans have their borders near the ferry, those who came were armed, in case of attack by enemies. Clan enmity and tribal warfare are very rife. I noticed that [411]
some of the men carried very long spears, much longer than those carried by the Chinese on the south of the river.

A few were carrying wine across, in goatskins. I was told 000

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

A few were carrying wine across, in goatskins. I was told

273 that they are great wine, or rather spirit, drinkers. The samshu distilled by the Chinese is far stronger than the local product made by the hillmen, and they prize what they can purchase on the market far more than what they make themselves.

491 Twenty miles above the Plain of the Great Well is another small market town, notable as the place where the first bridge across the Yangtse, from the mouth up, was built. The river is about thirty yards wide at this place, and across it was built a hawser bridge on the same principle as the transporter bridges. The Chinese name for such a transporter is "liu." It usually consists of just one big bamboo hawser, fastened to rocks on either side of the river. From the hawser hangs a loop, sometimes merely a loop of rope; sometimes a little board seat is provided as well. These rope transporters are very common over the many rivers of West China. The traveller slips into the loop and slides down to the lowest part of the hawser bridge. Then he pulls himself up, hand over hand, until he reaches the other side. Sometimes he is helped across by men who are stationed on either side, in charge of the transporter. These men pull the loop to either side, by means of a small rope attached to it. The first sensation as the loop is freed and goes down the slope is very strange. If you have any nerves at all they begin to be very jumpy. The slide down is comfortable enough, but what lies underneath is the disturbing factor in the situation. The lius are often over very treacherous stretches of water, with roaring rapids or fierce falls dashing against rocks in midstream. It is what awaits one, should the rope break, or the traveller lose his balance, that disturbs one. If you only think of the rope, and forget the raging waters and jagged

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

rocks below, the experience on the rope bridge is pleasant 491 enough. The first time I crossed one of these I was in company with another missionary, a fine specimen of a sturdy John Bull Englishman. I got safely over without mishap, and laughed at the quivering dance my nerves had set up as I hung over the rapids for a few seconds while the slack-pulling rope was being gathered in. My companion was not so fortunate. He slid down to the centre of the bridge all right, and then the man in charge began to pull up the rope on the other side. Before half the journey up had been completed, the pulling rope broke, and back went the traveller to the centre of the rope bridge, where he remained dangling for some time over the angry waters. It was an awkward position to be in, and did not look at all pleasant to those who were looking on.

Those who are used to this method of crossing rivers soon learn to treat the situation with freedom and carelessness. Sheep and goats are often sent across in the same way, and very rarely does a mishap take place.

This first bridge over the Yangtse, the bamboo transporter, 721
does not now exist. One night a band of the wildmen from 487
the unexplored hills silently crossed over, and while the Chinese in the little market near by were sleeping peacefully the hillmen set fire to the houses and in the confusion stole a number of children and gathered much loot. They were over the liu and clean away with their spoils before any steps could be taken to stop them. The day after the market people cut the bamboo transporter, and now the first bridge over the Yangtse is only reached after many hundred miles more have been travelled towards the source of the great river.

000 For days one travels along on the south bank of the river, reminded of a giant with one arm strong and muscular and the other withered and useless: the south bank beautifully cultivated and the north bare and withered up. Tales of midnight raids, of exciting adventure, of hairbreadth escapes, can be gathered on all hands. The dread hand of terror has a grip of all the people, and yet the soil is so fertile and productive that the Chinese are prepared to risk everything rather than move away. Many are the songs and ballads sung or chanted here to the plaintive strains of the quaint two-stringed fiddle. I have been told that the people living in this dangerous district can put such emotion and plaint into their song, that bystanders burst into tears as they squat and listen to the story of the sufferings of the song heroes and heroines. Those who imagine that the Chinese are devoid of high emotion and sentiment, and think that their most worshipped god is the god of riches, would be surprised if they got right to the back of the Chinaman's mind. They would find that there lives a great well of poetry and passion which at times bursts into high song and reveals a heart and mind akin to that of a southern European or a passionate Hindu. We laugh sometimes at the musical instruments of this Oriental race, and the screeching tones of the two-stringed fiddle almost set the teeth of a European on edge. Yet in the hands of a village expert these two strings can tell stories of passion and intrigue, of love and disappointment, and can move the emotions of the hearers in a marvellous way. Those who go to sleep at night with the great Yangtse roaring a few yards from their doors, and whose dreams are of the hillmen who for centuries have raided at will, and put their terror into the hearts of many, live very near the

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primitive emotions, and with song and rude instrument have learnt how to make these emotions vocal and how to interpret their meaning to their fellow-men. The song of the Upper Yangtse men is the song of real men and it plays on the emotions of those who are privileged to hear it.

CHAPTER IV

THE ABORIGINALS OF WEST CHINA

000 WHICHEVER way the traveller enters China he immediately finds a country full of interest and a people whose daily round of living seems altogether different from anything to be found in Europe or America. Wherever he lands, if he is a man with a seeing eye, it will be the people that have the most attraction for him. If he travels by the great Siberian railway, that wonderful monument to Russian genius and patience which stretches its way all through the north of Asia, and so enters China by Manchuria, he will see Mongol and Manchu, Chinese and Japanese, Russian and German, mixing with each other at the railway station, and in the busy marts, and in the mixing of these races he will see great political problems working themselves out, and he will wonder what will be the result in a hundred years' time of the commingling of these races, each with a mission and ideal of its own.

If he travels on one of the great liners and enters China by Shanghai, he will be still more impressed by the great crowds of mixed races. Someone from almost every country on the face of the globe walks the streets of Shanghai. Sikhs mix with Philippinos, Cantonese jostle Koreans, men from all the eighteen provinces of China frequent the tea-shops and theatres on the Foochow Road, bluejackets of various nations chum up together; Japanese, with their funny wooden clogs, make money in Hongkew; Britishers and Americans

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make and lose fortunes on the Exchange, while banks from nearly all the countries in Europe daily quote the world's prices. Women of every nationality, and white, yellow and black children are seen everywhere. In the midst of all this bewildering blending of races and confusion of interests the keenest man of business is the man who used to wear the pigtail and who now, in semi-Western dress, feels himself to be, what in all probability he is, the equal of any race on the face of the earth. The gathering of the races at Jerusalem for the great Pentecost Feast was a mild mixture compared with the gathering of peoples who throng the streets of China's chief open port, where nominally the white man rules but where in reality the yellow man is the great speculative owner of the soil and the ruling factor in most policies.

Should the traveller enter from Hong-Kong, the scene in the southern port of Canton is very much like that at Shanghai. Here again all countries, all races, all provinces are represented, and the quick-stepping, keen-eyed, much-travelled Chinaman is the enduring force which in the end will dominate.

There are at least two other great roads into China, one from the west through Burma into the western province of Yunnan, and one from the French colony of Tongking leading up that wonderful railway, one of the engineering triumphs of the world. This road also leads into the province of Yunnan. The traveller coming either of these ways will meet the same remarkable mixture of races. The Chinaman is much in evidence, but he is by no means alone. In the towns and villages, on the markets and by the roadside there is a picturesque blending of many peoples. Here are seen the aboriginal races of China, the men who in centuries gone

000 by dwelt throughout the whole land from the borders of Tibet to the shores of the China Sea.

The student of ethnology finds himself in his element when he reaches the populous western provinces of China. If he attends one of the important village markets on a market day he will hear a number of different languages spoken, see representatives of several different tribes, and watch as animated and interesting a scene as his heart could wish for. The small-footed Chinese woman with the long baggy trousers is but one of the many women on the market, and her crippled, unnatural walking motion compares very unfavourably with the quick, upright, graceful movements of the hillwomen, who would scorn to bind their feet, and who walk like women of a conquering race. Miao men with double pigtails, Nosu women with long skirts almost sweeping the ground, hill lasses with short skirts of many colours and long plaits of hair almost golden at the tips, strapping Min-Chia women bearing huge bundles of firewood hung by a strap around the forehead, here and there a Babu man with his long felt cape made, pleats and all, in one piece, women with curious horns on their heads, others with huge combs stuck crosswise in the back of their hair, long skirts and short skirts, wide trousers and no trousers shoes of many colours and shapes and, prettier and more graceful than all the five-toed natural foot, revealing no trace of deformity and equal to a hearty exciting dance on the hill-sides—these the traveller sees in markets of many parts of West China. The mixture of races confronts him again. Once more he faces old-world problems. Here, however, he does not wonder what will be the outcome in a hundred years' time. On the contrary, he sees a wonderful example of the patient way, the wise way, in which China has solved a problem which some European and American 000 Christian peoples fail entirely to solve. If the United States Government in America or the British Government in South Africa had pursued the same policy as China has pursued in her treatment of other races some of the burning questions of the world would have been settled long ago. As soon as China conquers a people she gives to them, on the same terms, all the privileges which her own sons possess. In the Manchu days, when the Civil Service of China and the Government degrees were open to all by a series of stiff examinations, a black Miao or a white Nosu could sit and compete side by side with the Sons of Han, who claimed all the best traditions of their great Chinese race.

One of the most powerful viceroys that has ever ruled in Western China was a Nosu from the province of Kwangsi. The General Long who at the time of writing this is ruling over the province of Kwangtung, in the interests of President Yuan, and who a short time ago crushed out all revolution centring in Canton, is an aboriginal of Yunnan. Several Christian aboriginal preachers belonging to the churches of Yunnan and Kweichow took their B.A. degrees in open competition and on equal terms with the Chinese literati. Some of the members of China's first Parliament were tribesmen from West China elected in the same way as the other members.

When the republic of China chose the five-bar flag as the national flag of the United Country many concluded, and I among them, that the black bar at the bottom of the flag included the tribes of West China. Through a friend at Shanghai I inquired of China's greatest lawyer, Dr Wu Ting Fang, formerly Ambassador to the United States, what

000 position in the flag the tribes of Yunnan and Kweichow held. He wrote back saying that in his opinion these peoples were included in the red bar, the Chinese bar holding the premier position at the head of the flag. As the tribes had submitted to the Chinese Government long ago, and were thereby entitled to the same privileges as the ordinary Sons of Han, the real Chinese, he concluded that they also were reckoned as Chinese. He said that he had met several of these men who had been elected to Parliament and concluded that they took their political stand by the side of the Chinese. Thus the aboriginals, in the opinion of this well-informed lawyer, were not included in the black Tibetan bar, but in the red Chinese bar. One can hardly imagine the whites of Australia treating their black aboriginals in this way, nor the Union Government of South Africa so treating the indentured Indians, who also are subjects of the great British Raj. When one studies closely the political statesmanship of the Chinese one can easily understand how the great empire has stood so long, weathering all changes, absorbing all conquerors, governing all conquered races, and as strong in the twentieth century as she was in the first. One is bewildered when one first attempts to classify all the tribes of Western China. Long inquiry, however, has led one to simplify them all into two or at most three races. I should divide all these peoples into Nosu, Miao and Shan. The Shan dwell in the western
131 parts of Yunnan and spread into Burma. The Nosu are all over Yunnan, in the west of Szechuan and in a small part of Kweichow. The Miao are found all over Kweichow, in some parts of Yunnan and in a few places in Szechuan. Nearly all the tribes one meets with in these three western provinces can be divided into these three classes. One bases

this division partly on similarity of customs among the 131
different branches of the same class and partly on evidence
furnished by the languages spoken by the various tribes.

The Nosu and Miao languages stand in one class and the 193
Shan in another. In nearly all words of the first class the
vowel ends the word. The trifling exception to this rule is
found in words which end in "ng." These two languages
are thus similar to the Japanese, where the same rule
prevails. It can easily be noticed in such words as Yo-ko-ha-
ma, Na-ga-sa-ki. In some words which have been taken
from Chinese, whose language and literature have had great
influence over the Island Kingdom, this vowel-ending rule
has been modified, but in purely Japanese words the rule
which is extant in Nosu and Miao prevails there also. This
fact may strengthen the very reasonable idea held by some,
that the Japanese race originally came from the east coast of
China, where centuries ago the Miao races predominated.
This vowel-ending rule, which gives great euphony to the
languages, is broken when one comes to the Shan dialects,
and one immediately concludes that the Shan belong to
another race than the Nosu or Miao. On comparing the [192]
various dialects spoken by the different branches of the Nosu
and Miao one soon sees that these two peoples have freely
borrowed words from each other. The structure of the
languages is, however, very different. In the Nosu languages
the object follows the subject and precedes the verb. When 000
one first came up against this peculiarity something very
familiar seemed to touch one's brain. It seemed as if one
had had a dream years ago, and then suddenly had run up
against the places and events of the dream. After a while
the ghost of Julius Cæsar appeared to one, and the memory

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

[Plate facing p. 56]

OOC

A RUDE STOCKADE ON A HILL AS A DEFENCE AGAINST RAIDS

A GROUP OF YOUNG ABORIGINALS

In the background hemp stalks are drying in the sun.

000 of days at school when we, as novices, were struggling with De Bello Gallico, came back vividly. That wretched elusive verb which refused to appear until everything else under the sun had appeared, and claimed the privilege of ending all sentences and trumping all cards, how it had worried us in the young days! And how pleased we were to find it strongly entrenched in this Eastern language, refusing to take any place until subject, object and explanatory words had all appeared. Nosu and Julius Cæsar joined together by the idiosyncrasy of a verb! If the great warrior were only to appear again he might find in the sturdy Nosu races of West China warlike legions enough not to win him the purple of Rome but the Dragon Seat of the greatest empire in the greatest of continents.

In Miao the verb is as it is in English. It is content to link subject with object and never from false modesty or pure perversity refuses to appear until all else has come into the limelight. If one has any doubt as to where to locate any of the many tribes in West China the position of the verb in the sentence will, as a rule, give one an unerring clue to the solution of the problem.

During the last decade Westerners have come closely into touch with many of these tribes. Both Protestant and Catholic missionaries have lived for years right among these peoples, and their secrets, which had been hid for ages, are now open to all who wish to know. The Chinese have never taken a great deal of trouble to find out the history of these different tribes, and while willing that the aboriginals shall come up to them, learn of them, and share their privileges, they have never been very keen on learning from the aboriginals. Possibly the example of Mencius has confirmed

101 Possibly the example of Mencius has confirmed

the Chinese in their attitude towards the tribesmen. The ancient philosopher said: "I have heard of men using the doctrines of our great land of China to change barbarians, but I have never yet heard of any being changed by barbarians." The word translated "barbarian" is the word commonly used to denote the Nosu. In spite of Mencius, the aboriginals have many good points which the Chinese might learn of them.

000 There exists one fairly interesting Chinese book which deals with some of the tribes in Yunnan, but the writer is evidently not very much in love with his subject. He gives, however, a story as to the origin of the Chinese and Nosu. The story says that King Asoka of Magadha, in India, the great Indian king who lived in the fourth century B.C., and favoured Buddhism, took to wife one of the natives of Yunnan, and by her had a son named Ti-meng-sie. This son again had nine sons, and the third, Meng-sie-nioh, became the ancestor of the Chinese. The ninth son, Meng-sie-tsuh, became the ancestor of the white Nosu. Both statements are evidently stupid blunders, or can only refer to some local family, a branch of which afterwards adopted Chinese customs and was looked on as the head of the Chinese in that district. The Nosu have a far earlier origin than the fourth century B.C. Very likely they were in China long before the Chinese trekked from the north-west, and established themselves in South Shensi and North Honan.

Some of the stories of the aboriginals told by this writer are very good. One or two sound strangely familiar. A ruler's widow, with her son, who was the heir to the throne, was closely pursued by enemies. One day the son took refuge in an old temple, and shortly after those who wished to

000 capture him came up to the entrance of this temple. They noticed that stretched out over the gateway was a large unbroken spider's web, and immediately went away, concluding that no one could have entered that temple.

There is another pretty story illustrating the old adage that marriages are made in heaven. Possibly they were in the old times of long, long ago, but a great many nowadays are made anywhere but in heaven. Prince Meng-ko-lo-feng had a daughter, and when she was grown up he wished to choose a husband for her. The girl refused her consent to this course, saying that it was not right to choose a husband, but that one ought to let heaven make the choice. She told her father that she wished to sit backwards on an ox and let it go where it liked. She said : " No matter what family lives in the house where the ox goes, whether poor or rich, honourable or low, there I wish to be married." The father was at last compelled to let his daughter have her own way. Women had a way of getting their own even in those remote days. The girl then proceeded to put her plan into execution. She sat on the ox backward, and the animal, with its romantic rider, set off on its fateful journey. Presently, when going down a narrow lane, it turned its head aside and entered a lowly cottage. The girl got off, and seeing an old woman sitting in the house she asked her the question : " Have you a son ? " "Yes," was the reply ; "he is out gathering firewood at present." The princess then bowed to the old lady as daughters do to their mothers-in-law, and soon after married the son who had been out gathering firewood in total ignorance of the romance awaiting him at home. The prince was very angry at the turn of affairs and cut his daughter right off.

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One day the husband, noticing the ornament in his wife's hair, asked her what it was made of. The wife told him it was made of gold. Then the husband said: "Where I gather firewood there are many stones which are similar to that." He went and brought one back, and they found that it was indeed gold. Soon after the daughter made a feast and invited her father. He refused to come, and sent a message saying: "If you are able to build me a golden bridge and a silver road from my house to yours, I will come, but not otherwise." By means of the gold discovered on the hillside the daughter actually carried out the father's seemingly impossible condition. When the father walked across the golden bridge he sighed and said: "Truly this is a marriage made in heaven."

The same Chinese writer says of one tribe that each chief has several hundred wives and even ordinary men have several tens. One wonders where they managed to get such quantities of women, unless in those days it was male and not female infanticide that was common. The women of this tribe are said to have a magic plan to make their husbands think of them even when they are a thousand li away. But "This plan they will reveal to no outsider." If one could only find out such a plan and turn it to commercial use one might make a fortune in some Eastern countries.

The bridegrooms of another tribe carry their brides home on their backs.

With such stories the Chinese author adds a little interest to the records of the four volumes which compose his *Unofficial Records of the Southern State.*

One is quite safe in saying that in the next fifty years the world will know more about the aboriginals of West China

000 from the writings of Westerners than from the writings of Chinese. One wishes, however, that some gifted sympathetic Chinaman would set to work to gather up all the records possible of these deeply interesting tribes people. Writing from an Oriental standpoint, the result of such labours would be of immense value.

CHAPTER V

DOWN TO THE FERRY

IT was in the month of November when my chance came 000 to enter the land north of the Yangtse and to attempt to lift the veil from that deeply interesting country. No European had as yet penetrated the heart of independent Nosu land, and it can be easily imagined that I was very much excited at the adventures which were to come.

I was living at that time in the city of Chaotung, the second largest city in the province of Yunnan, and just twenty miles from where I am now writing this story.

The friend who promised to guide me on my much-longed-for trip was a wealthy chieftain named Long. This Mr Long lives near the River Yangtse, on the slopes of a high hill facing the land where dwell the famous, much-dreaded tribesmen. In early days he had been the centre of much fighting, and had only been saved by the wisdom and great exertions of his mother, a most remarkable aboriginal woman. When Mr Long was but two years old, the whole country-side was in the throes of the great Mohammedan rebellion which centred at Tali Fu, in the west of Yunnan. This rebellion cost millions of lives, and decades of hard work, before the Central Government once more got supreme control. There was continuous fighting on all hands, and much land was lost or stolen. A Mr Hsu tried hard to get all the land of the Longs, and the widowed mother had to fight persistently to keep what she had. She was determined to deliver her estates

000 intact to her only son when he became of age. One of the first things she did was to remove her boy from the scene of conflict and to ensure his safety. So, in charge of a faithful slave, she sent the little boy across the Yangtse into the home of some friend among the independent Nosu. Here he was safe from his enemies, and the mother could fight and scheme unembarrassed by the presence of the boy on whose life so much hung. The mother now set to work to beat off her opponents. Again and again they attempted to gain possession of the well-fortified house in which she lived, and on two occasions they managed to get within the outer walls. Once they forced their way right up to the doors of the innermost house, and the defending retainers were on the point of giving way. The dauntless woman, however, was not to be beaten. She would show her men how to fight. She seized a gun, charged it with extra powder and shot and discharged it through the door, right into the face of her enemies. There was great risk of its exploding and destroying the desperate woman. Fortunately it only killed several of the enemy and demoralised their attack. Her own men recovered their courage, and beat the attackers right off. Never again did the men of Hsu get so near victory. Later on, when the Mohammedans were finally crushed and law began to reign again. the woman who had fought so dauntlessly displayed her energies in another field. She entered the law courts and won case after case until at last she was left in peace. In the end the son entered on his great inheritance which no enemy had succeeded in wresting from its faithful, brave defender. The mother showed her remarkable character in another way. She wished to make sure of the lands in years to come, and so chose three wives for her one son,

settled each of these wives in a separate home within the same 000
great compound and sheltered by the same strong walls, and
arranged that her son should spend his time a month in each
establishment. This plan has answered fairly well, and the
three wives have managed to live in moderate peace. The
first wife has had no son, but the second wife has three. She
has been the favourite and most powerful wife.

At the invitation of Mr Long I went to stay at his
place, with the idea of making an attempt to cross over the
river. On the way to Mr Long's we stayed the night once 463
or twice in the homes of Nosu landlords, who live south of
the Yangtse, and so got an insight into the home life of these
people. At every one of these homes we were treated most 574
hospitably, a sheep being killed for us on each occasion. 262
A very short time after the sheep was killed we were all
sitting around the table devouring it. Years ago I used to
wonder at the records in Genesis about guests waiting while
animals were killed and prepared for the next meal. I no
longer wonder at this most ordinary occurrence. In more
ways than one, the Westerner who lives on the hills of West
China finds himself in the days of Abraham. Once the
hospitable feast began with an extraordinary dish, much
prized by these Nosu. The liver, stomach, heart, etc., of the
sheep are minced up very finely, and are highly seasoned
with pepper, chillies, onions, salt and other condiments.
This dish is usually quite raw, and each guest eats with a [415]
single porcupine quill. It sounds a bit awkward, but in
reality one soon gets to use the single quill quite dexterously.
I have eaten many better dishes than raw sheep. The Nosu
are, however, very partial to this dish, and give it to their
guests as a luxury.

133 In travelling the three days' journey to Mr Long's home we had to cross a very high range of hills, on the top of which are a large number of beautiful springs of water. Down in the valleys below these hills one often finds tracts of land quite waterless, and here, high up, where scarcely anyone lives, and where wolves are very common, we came across much boggy land, with large gushing streams of beautifully clear water. I do not know the explanation of this exalted water system.

137 Descending the farther side of this high range of hills, we came across large quantities of the young edelweiss. These young gossamer-covered flowers are far more beautiful than the mature flowers. When the dew has fallen on the little flowers, and the early morning sun shines on them, the sight is one to make a traveller very glad. At such times these flowers seem to me as if they had come straight out from fairyland, and to speak of a world where all must be tending towards peace and beauty.

372 After spending a night in one of these aboriginal homes, where pine logs are usually burnt, and where there is no outlet for the dense smoke, one is always glad to get into the open air again, and the hills, covered with their flowers, in the early morning sunshine, greet one with the cheeriest of greetings. One often wishes of an evening to escape from the smoke and dirt of the indoors, out into the moonlight and
231 the late evening calm. But one scarcely ever dares to do so, for the dogs, kept by these Nosu landlords, are often terribly fierce and ready to tear a stranger to pieces. Sometimes, if I have ventured two feet outside of the door, I have had to have the landlord or one of his servants by my side, armed with a heavy stick. Only by free use of this stick, and by

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

vigorous shouting and cursing can the dogs be kept from 231 attacking the stranger; and they always seem to resent the interference on the part of the landlord with the stick, as if they were unjustly, and in an unsportsmanlike manner, being deprived of their legitimate prey. The landlord who gave us the savoury dish eaten with the porcupine quill had ten dogs, and they were fierce brutes all of them. They tried their best to get at me, and I moved about in great fear of a sudden rear attack. In addition to the dogs our host had one hundred sheep, twenty cows, ten horses, twenty pigs, forty fowls, and was worth about two thousand ounces of silver. In his household at the time of our visit he had six 567 male and seven female slaves.

When we arrived at Mr Long's home we had a very warm 574 welcome, and were soon very comfortably settled in a room specially built for guests. Some of these aboriginal chiefs know well how to make guests feel at home. It happened to be the month of the second Mrs Long, and to her fell the care of the guests. I have never known a lady, in England or China, who knows better how to care for guests. From early morn till late at night, she and her servants see that guests want for nothing, and he must be a very churl who cannot respond to such Oriental kindness.

After supper we sat around a large charcoal fire and told 186 yarns. Mr Long said Chinese and Nosu were like goats and sheep. No sooner are the Chinese bullied than they begin to cry out like goats, and to call the attention of all the world to their troubles. The Nosu, he said, were like sheep, you may even kill them, and they will remain quiet while you do so. I should like to hear what the Chinese would say in reference to this comparison. I remember passing a

186 farmer's house on one occasion, and he was taking the skins off a number of lambs. I stopped and watched the process, wondering why the farmer was doing so. In reply to my question he told me that in the night a wolf had got into the fold, and had bitten a large number of sheep and lambs. I asked him whether he had not heard the noise of the killing, as the fold formed a part of the house in which he lived. "No," said the man, "these stupid sheep will let the wolf kill as many as he wishes, and never cry out. Now, if they had been goats, they would have made noise enough to wake us all up, and we should have given the wolf more than he expected." It depends on the point of view, as to how you pass verdict on sheep and goats.

136 During the first night at Mr Long's the wolves outside of the walls howled fearfully. The long howl of the brutes makes one feel very creepy. If three or four of these animals are separated, and start calling to each other, the noise is a most uncanny one. The wolf puts his head low down, close to the ground, and begins to howl on a very low note. Gradually raising his head, till his nose points up to the sky, the howl goes up to a higher and still higher note, when it dies away like the song of an angry gust of wind on a wild March night. The dogs inside the walls replied to the howl of the roaming hungry wolves by continuous angry barks, and seemed as if they were longing to try conclusions with the midnight raiders. Not long before, a wolf had managed
136 to get right into the compound. It did this more than once,
224 and then it was determined to catch him. A small pig was tied up in a basket, just under the room in which I afterwards slept. Men were stationed all about in hiding, ready to rush out as soon as the wolf should appear. Dust was

scattered near the several breaches in the wall, by which the 136 wolf might escape, and a man was told off at each of these 224 breaches to guard. If the wolf escaped it would be known by the footprints in the dust at which breach he had got out, and the man responsible for letting the marauder escape was to have a good beating the next morning. Attracted by the cries of the uncomfortable pig, the wolf came over into the garden outside of the guests' room and tried to get at the pig. Then the fun commenced. Men with torches rushed in, shut the garden gates, and chased the wolf all over the place. After much sport and hilarious laughter, a spear-thrust ended the midnight raids of the pork-loving wolf.

On Sunday morning we went out and sat on the hill-side, 000 gazing intently at the mountains of Nosuland, and wondering what we should find there, if we succeeded in getting over the Yangtse ferry. The hills on that side were very like the hills on which we were resting, and yet the fact that no European had ever been among them invested them with a romantic interest, such as the hills we were well acquainted with did not possess. The unknown was calling us, and we longed to jump across the great valley and land straight away among the brave men who had held their own so long against all efforts to dislodge them.

On Monday we made a few final preparations, and on Tuesday started down the long hill, to try our luck at the ferry. The evening before we started a tall Nosu lady, who had relatives across the river, came to see us, and warned us to beware of treachery. The lady said that the hillmen were very fickle, and even if we succeeded in getting among them they might at any time turn right against us, and hold us to heavy ransom or sell us into slavery. On hearing this

000 warning of the tall Nosu lady, those of us who were going across held a council, to see what should be done. The conclusion was reached that it was well to be armed and ready for any emergency. I refused all offers of firearms, knowing that I had something with me more effective than any of the weapons which could have been provided for me. I was determined if possible to win the friendship of these much-feared people, and to prepare the way for opening mission work among them later on. It has often been flung up against missionaries that the soldier has prepared the way for the man with the Bible, and that without the soldier the missionary has no chance. This may have been true in some cases, but on the other hand there are many places where missionaries have lived for years before other Europeans have appeared on the scenes. Among other things I had a telescope and a camera, and I soon saw that my companions were determined that these should take a share in the defence of the party. It is not always the weapons which one actually possesses, but the weapons which one is supposed to possess, which duly impress the natives. The Chinese colloquial name for telescope is " the thousand-li glass." My men altered the last word to " gun," and I found out later on that they told marvellous stories of what this gun would do. It would kill all it could see, up to a distance of a thousand Chinese miles. Fortunately the gun never went off, and there never was an occasion on which we needed to fire it, even in imagination. As to the camera, the rôle it was supposed to fill on occasions was that of machine-gun, of marvellous magic power, under the direction of the man who retired beneath the dark cloth. As my companions spun these yarns about the telescope and camera, I could

easily see that a feeling of confidence was coming over them, 000 and that they were facing the dangers of the unknown with comparatively light hearts. They felt sure they would be able to bluff all opposition they might run up against, and events, as they turned out, proved their confidence to be well founded. It was the ignorance and superstition of the other people that made our weapons so powerful. Had there been any souls brave enough to put the terrible thousand-mile gun to the test, it might have been a little awkward for those who put their confidence in it.

The climb down to the Yangtse was a very difficult one. Some of the roads were covered with small stones, which rolled about like ball-bearings as one trod on them. Ball-bearings may be fine for machinery, but they are abominably uncomfortable and somewhat dangerous to walk on. Nearing the banks of the great river, we found large numbers of orange and pepper trees. The pods of the cotton flower were just forming, while some of the yellow flowers were still in bloom. The other side of the river, on the contrary, was covered with rank jungle, and yet its very barrenness seemed to call one with great insistence. A mile or two down river we came to a small market town named Shin Chan Keo—"The Valley of the New Mine." This is the little town where is the ferry we wished to cross. On our success at this ferry hung the success of the adventure we were undertaking. We had to stay the night at the market, and hoped to get across in the morning. After dark the ferryman came to tell us he could not possibly take us across in the morning, nor indeed at any other time. He had received instructions to on no account let us cross over, and it was as much as his position was worth to disobey his instructions. We were up

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against block number one, and now things settled down into a kind of game of chess, in which the men on the board were really human. Some were prepared to play the game according to rules, but our opponents followed another set of rules, in which the taking of life was by no means forbidden. There were one or two men on the market who were determined to prevent our entry into Nosuland by all means, fair or foul. These men were the leading men of the place, and one of them, a Mr Tien, wielded a great amount of influence in the whole district. For some reason or other, he hated Mr Long, and as I was in Mr Long's company he shared his hatred with me also. We let these men know very clearly that in the morning we were going to cross the Yangtse or we would know from someone the reason why. Having stated our determination to win the game, we resolved to do what we have so often done in the face of difficulties, go to sleep over them. It makes your opponent feel very queer when you treat all his objections with such coolness that you can put them aside and go to sleep. We left the board to them and allowed them to make what moves they liked, feeling sure that in the morning we could take up the game where we left off, in spite of what they might do. Our confidence was overplaced, for at that time we did not know what a desperate lot of enemies we had to deal with. They were willing to go to all lengths, even though it might cost the lives of a number of innocent people. The plotters went to scheme, and we to sleep, while the ferry-boat remained securely tied up to the southern shore, not far from where we were sleeping.

CHAPTER VI

WINNING OUR FIRST GAME

A FEW days before we reached the little market town where the all-important ferry was, H. E. Chen, the Defender of the Yangtse Marches, had come up from his headquarters at Mitieh on an inspection of the southern side of the river. On arriving at Shin Chan Keo he had heard in some way or other that a foreigner was about to make an attempt to get into the country of the hillmen, and he at once gave instructions to the keepers of the ferry that they were on no account to allow this foreigner to get across the Yangtse. In those last days of Manchu rule, mandarins had great power, and could usually make it extremely inconvenient for those who tried to thwart their wishes. It must be remembered also that all the ferries in the district are Government property, and are usually farmed out to those whose interest it is to keep well in with the ruling powers. It can easily be seen that the ferry farmer and his helpers did not wish to have any trouble with H. E. Chen, and the coming on the scenes of the foreigner faced them with a problem they did not know how to solve easily. It was quite natural, therefore, that they should inform me that they were unable to take me across, and do all they could to dissuade me from the attempt. They dwelt much on the treacherous nature of the hill Nosu, on the possibility of their killing us or holding us to a heavy ransom, and on the thousand and one unknown dangers which the Chinese

OOO are only too ready to imagine existing in a land which they are only very imperfectly acquainted with. Had we believed all these stories, and turned back, the boatmen would have been very pleased, and for long would have laughed at the Westerner who had come to the ferry and turned coward. They little knew that all the uncanny stories they told had the very reverse of the desired effect, in that they only made us all the more desirous of lifting the veil which had for so long hung over this unknown part of the Chinese Empire.

On the market street I had a friend, a Mr Lo, whose special business was that of arbitrator in all local disputes or quarrels. We had known each other for years. He also came and tried to dissuade us from our adventure. He of course was afraid to give Mr Tien away, as it would have been dangerous for him to offend such a powerful local man. He wanted to know why I was so anxious to go across, and when I told him that among other things I hoped to tell the hillmen the story which I believe is destined to transform the world, he laughed most heartily. The idea of these wildmen being able to understand and respond to the teachings of a missionary was indeed ridiculous to him.

To all entreaties and requests we had returned the same answer—we intended to cross over in the ferry in the morning. It was not until long after that we found out all the plottings of that night while we were asleep at Shin Chan Keo. Mr Tien was determined to prevent our getting across, and was willing to go to any lengths in order to achieve his purpose. It was proposed at first to damage the boat in the night, so as to render it unnavigable in the morning. It was suggested that a plank or two be knocked out of the bottom and the boat sunk in fairly shallow water. This has been done before now. The boat farmer was not very keen on this plan, and 000 it was not quite drastic enough to please the man who was so bent on opposing us. Mr Tien at last unfolded his plan, and it was really a diabolical plan, revealing the recklessness of our enemy. He proposed that the boatmen should start to take our party across, and, when the boat reached the really dangerous waters in midstream, these men should jump over, with their oars, letting the boat with its full cargo drift down to the terrible rapids below. It would have reached these and been smashed up, drowning, in all probability, all on board. There are no red life-boats on these upper reaches of the river. Only one or two of us could swim, but it is no easy matter for an expert swimmer to save his life in such terrific rapids. In this way Mr Tien proposed to stop the foreigner from lifting the veil, and at the same time to wreak his vengeance on Mr Long. What mattered it to him if a few lives were lost ? There was, however, one obstacle to the carrying out of this plan, and it was one that would never have entered my mind. I might have thought that Mr Tien would contemplate the discovery of his plot and of his being held responsible for the death of an Englishman, as well as of several Chinese and Nosu. This, however, did not seem to worry him a great deal. He felt sure that no one on the market would dare to give him away, and as all on board, except the men in the know, would be drowned, there would be no danger of being found out. Possibly, had his plans been carried out as he proposed, he would have reported the terrible catastrophe and have been one of the loudest lamenters. The obstacle in the way had to do with a secret society. To understand the position, one must know that secret societies exist all up and down the Yangtse Valley, and some of them are very powerful. These societies are divided into different "Palaces" or "Hill Halls," and all the members of a palace are termed brethren. These societies are really great brotherhoods, taking their origin from the scene in Chinese history where three brave men swore eternal brotherhood in a "Peach Garden." One of these men later on became Emperor of the Western Han dynasty, and the other two were his principal military commanders. This brotherhood seized hold of the imagination of the Chinese, and the adventures of these famous three form the groundwork of the principal novel published in the land. The novel is known everywhere. It has been dramatised into many plays, and has been acted in almost every town and large village throughout China, over and over again. It has had a profound influence on the life and aspirations of the people. Every now and again the Central Government tries to suppress the secret societies or brotherhoods, going so far at times as to make it a capital crime to belong to them. But all such efforts fail, and will fail as long as the novel, *The Story of the Three Kingdoms*, is allowed to circulate widely.

The members of a palace, or hill hall, will back each other up in everything, and the leader, the "Great Gentleman," as he is termed, wields great power and can often render even official interference fruitless.

Mr Tien is a leader in one of these palaces. Fortunately for our party we had with us a prominent member of another palace, a relative of Mr Long, and if the boat were wrecked, and this second palace leader were drowned, then Mr Tien knew that the brothers of the second leader might take dire vengeance if it ever came out that he had met his death as the result of foul play. Mr Tien therefore set his wits to work to prevent this Mr Teng-Shiao from going across in the same boat. He felt pretty sure that he could accomplish this small matter, and so considered the matter of the foreigners getting into Nosuland as settled. Then the conspirators retired for the rest of the night, and possibly slept the sleep of men who realise they have accomplished something and done a good stroke of work. We were sleeping peacefully, never dreaming that the men who had seemed so friendly a few hours before had practically condemned us to a cruel death.

The morning came and we were astir quite early. We were all excited, wondering what was going to happen. We were in all a party of fourteen, several of the men being Nosu from across the river. Three of the latter rejoiced in the euphonious names of Choo-mo lu-ha, Su-ka sho-hu, A-tsu tu-ta, names very different from those usually borne by Chinese. A-tsu tu-ta was a man of resource, able to get one out of almost any difficulty.

While we were getting breakfast and preparing for the crossing which we had announced the night before was going to take place, the conspirators were also busy. Their efforts were now concentrated on thinking out some plan to delay the crossing over of the second palace man. Mr Tien approached him and did his best to get him to delay for a subsequent boat, but Mr Teng-Shiao refused to be separated from the main party. No amount of unostentatious manœuvring succeeded in getting rid of the man who was too powerful in brothers to be drowned by foul play. I had not the slightest idea at that time that the young fellow, who was known as a reckless wild blood, was of such immense value to all our lives. It was the story of the Cities of the

Plain over again, only in reverse action. The presence of one wild blood was to save the lives of a number of innocent persons. The conspirators were baffled. Mr Tien did not find his plot working out just as he anticipated. The subtle arranging of his men which was to have resulted in the sweeping off the board of Queen and Bishop and a couple of Knights broke down just at the critical point, and checkmate seemed as far off as ever. The plotters retired to reconsider the situation, and we continued our preparations. At nine o'clock we left the inn and walked some way up the river-bank. The boat was to follow us up. It was necessary to start high up the river so that the boat should not be swept too far down in the crossing. We had no intention, if we could help it, of making too close an acquaintance with the great rapids, and we did not know then that there were any others who were anxious that we should do so. As we walked along we passed several openings to an old silver mine which years ago had been profitably worked. We were told that gases met in the mine had overcome and killed several of the miners and had led to the abandonment of the workings. The people have no plan for coping with these gases.

We waited on the sands for the boat to come up. The conspirators gave up at last the idea of wrecking the boat, and determined to get their own in another way. They decided first to send in a report to the Defender of the Marches that we had taken charge of the boat by force and had compelled the ferry farmer to allow us to cross. They set to work also, without delay, to make it as uncomfortable as possible for us in Nosuland and to prevent us from ever getting back again. If we crossed the ferry once they were determined to prevent us from recrossing it on our way back.

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How they plotted we shall see later on. While waiting on the sands we amused ourselves by throwing stones across the river. As a rule the Chinese cannot throw stones. You can get a lot of fun if you can persuade a party of Chinese teachers to start throwing stones. Almost any aborigine little girl can beat these teachers hollow. But the Nosu hillmen are great stone-throwers. I had no chance whatever with them. But I got my own back and recovered a bit of a reputation when I started these men jerking. They had never done this before and were very awkward at the new method.

Presently the ferry-boat reached us. What were the last words Mr Tien said to the captain I do not know, but I expect he followed the usual custom and said some very flowery, uncomplimentary words about the ancestors of both Mr Long and the English missionary. That, however, did not trouble me, and I hope it gave no discomfort to my friend. We all went on board. We were twenty of us and a calf. Our horses we had sent back as the roads we were to travel over were not just suited to horse-riding. When we came to the district where horse-riding was feasible we resolved to borrow of the tribesmen. At last! The rope was gathered in. The word was given to push off. The boat started on its short but fateful journey from Chinese territory to Nosuland, where the Chinaman takes second place and where the mandarin's writ does not run. For this latter fact we had reason before long to be very thankful indeed. After a long sweep down-stream, quite near enough to those dangerous rapids, we landed on the other side. We had won through. In the first long struggle with Mr Tien victory rested with us. But he was by no means ready to give up the struggle, and

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hoped for better success on the next occasion. Humanly speaking, we owed our lives to that wicked little man, Mr Teng-Shiao. A year or two after I was able to repay him. He had been more than usually reckless in his carrying out the plans of his palace, and the prefect of Chaotung was on his track. The prefect came over to see me one day to tell me about this man, and to inform me that he was going to cut his head off as soon as he got him. The prefect knew that I was friendly with this man, and had come across to talk the matter over. Mr Teng-Shiao was not caught, and his head was very firmly on his shoulders when I last heard about him. The revolution in China caused many reverses in fortune, and startlingly changed the outlook of the man whose presence saved our lives when we were crossing the ferry. Some time after I had finished my adventure in Nosuland this young fellow gathered together a number of large coffin boards and took them down to Suifu, the first great mart on the Yangtse. On this consignment of boards he made a profit of three hundred taels of silver. He spent several months at this place and came back empty-handed. Nearly all the money had been spent in learning from a famous boxer the art of boxing according to Chinese rules. My friend proved to be very proficient in mastering this art. When the revolution was over he entered the military school at Yunnan Fu, and is now in training for an officer in the army. His fame as a boxer soon became known throughout the schools of the city, and the military governor has taken a great interest in him. One day the governor brought a French officer with him to have a round with Mr Teng-Shiao. For an hour the tall Frenchman and the wily short Nosu fought round after round, and at the end of an hour the contest was proclaimed drawn. What will be the future career of this man I cannot guess. I only know that I and others are very glad his presence on our boat saved us from a terrible end in the furious rapids of Shin Chan Keo.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4
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[Plate facing p.80]

SWIFT WATERS OF THE VERY UPPER YANGTSE

Sugar-cane fields are in the foreground.

CHAPTER VII

LIFTING THE VEIL

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AS we stepped ashore I remembered that I was a missionary, and being such the first thing I did was to take off my hat and pray that peace and salvation might come to the land where dwell the people so despised by the Chinese.

The cliffs on both sides of the river are here of red sandstone and the soil on both banks was similar. The hills had the same formations and the climate was identical. And yet everything seemed changed. One's feet in Nosuland seemed to tread more lightly than in purely Chinese territory. It was almost as if one's furlough had become due and one had said good-bye to China and started for European scenes once more. What that means only the man who has lived for ten years or more on end in Eastern countries can realise. The air we breathed seemed purer. The whole atmosphere was changed. I remember how on another occasion I had the same feeling. It was when I left Russia to enter Germany. In the former country one's passport had to be in evidence everywhere, and whatever you did or wherever you went you felt that a power not very friendly to travellers had you in sight. It reminded one of the old prints one saw so frequently in the mid-Victorian era, with a single eye staring at one from the top of the picture. However interesting the print, there was that piercing single

000 eye over all, looking at one and giving one a peculiar feeling of unrest and discomfort. So it was in Russia. But when the borders were passed and the German train was entered, one felt that one was in a free country, where modern ideas prevailed and where one was at liberty to talk and think as one pleased on almost any subject.

Here we were at last in unknown Nosuland, the bogey land of the Western Chinese, the surprise land of West China, whose inhabitants are practically independent, where there are no Buddhist temples, no debasing Temples of Hades casting a gloom over the thought of all the people, no women with deformed feet, no infanticide of unwelcome baby girls, no overpowering mandarins with their retinue of unscrupulous squeezing underlings. We were in a new country as different from the province of Yunnan as Norway is from Russia or the highlands of Scotland are from the Black Country.

The first few miles we travelled in Nosuland lay through a kind of debatable no-man's-land, where several tribes have fought their inter-tribal battles and where small parties of unarmed travellers are exposed to sudden attack from robbers who can hide themselves securely in the tall jungle. We therefore stopped for a while and held council of war. Guns were all loaded, and Chief Long gave strict instructions that we were to keep close together. If the party straggled, the devil, in the person of hidden robbers, was likely to take the hindmost. Chief Long put eight cartridges into his Winchester rifle. His cousin asked permission to carry the telescope, and as he went along I heard him telling some of the Nosu who were with us that there were twenty cartridges in his wonderful thousand-mile gun, able to work terrible destruction if it became necessary.

202 We had not gone very far before our party began to whoop a Nosu war-whoop. The sound was of great volume, and had it suddenly burst out during the night on the peaceful sleepers of a Chinese village one can easily imagine how startled and frightened the people there would be. The whoop of our men was soon answered from some of the hills near by. A party of hillmen had been bringing great coffin boards from the interior and as they were climbing the hill on their return journey they answered the shout of our men. I was told that different clans have different whoops, and that messages are conveyed by means of these hill shouts. Sometimes a keen note of derision is put into the whoop. All the Orientals are past masters in deriding or cursing an adversary.

311 The no-man's-land we passed through was covered with long jungle grass as tall as one's neck. There was not a sign of cultivation anywhere. Formerly on this land there dwelt four thousand Chinese families, and we were shown a site where there used to be held a very busy market. Cotton, sugar-cane, sweet potatoes, etc., were largely cultivated. Later on there was a quarrel between two Nosu chiefs in the neighbourhood and constant fights between the two. In their long quarrel they cleared out all the Chinese, driving them across the river. It seemed a great pity that such a great stretch of valuable land should lie waste when south of the river there were multitudes of people who with great difficulty managed to get enough to keep body and soul together.

152 We were considerably troubled by a kind of grass which
137 has a barbed spike on it. These little spikes work their way through any clothing and enter the flesh almost as if they

were insects. As they enter the flesh they act like fish-hooks, 152
and are pulled out with difficulty. One of these thorns 137
entered the arm of one of the men. After he had extracted it he wished to show his anger to the thorn and proceeded to bite it in two. But in this angry process he came off second best, for the thorn entered his tongue and gave him a lot of pain. It was at last extracted with a pair of small tweezers I had in my pocket-knife.

As we travelled along, all on the qui vive, Mr Long described 487
how robbers quiet any man they may succeed in capturing. To prevent his calling out to any companions who may be near they thrust a stone into his mouth, and tie this around with a girdle. The gag is most effective. After a few miles we left the debatable land which lay by the Yangtse, and, turning to the right, went inland. For some distance we followed the course of a silvery stream. The waters were sparkling and very beautiful, but the road was execrable. Sometimes it was just a few ledges cut in the face of a rock. At other times it was a big log placed against a rock. By means of a few notches cut in the log we had to climb up. Again rough trees were stretched from ledge to ledge in a cliff, and over these we had to climb. We felt very glad that we had not brought our horses, for they could never have faced the roads we walked or climbed over—not that these horses are not able to face rough roads. I have a pony now which will face almost anything that one finds on the rough roads of China. Places that I walk over with difficulty he will carry me over without a shake or a refusal. Sometimes he seems as if he were half goat. I have known him go up a cliff that I had to negotiate in some places on all-fours. But tree-climbing is too much for even an old, well-tried, clever horse.

487 When crossing the stream on one occasion one of the men fell into the water and got a thorough soaking. As soon as we reached the other side we made a huge fire of brushwood, so that the wet man could dry his clothes before we proceeded on our journey.

245 Travelling along, we passed a number of olive-trees with fruit in rich profusion. Many of the Chinese are very fond of this fruit. It is sour when first tasted, but the flavour soon turns to a very agreeable sweetness.

563 After we had passed through the valley, where the stream with the silvery waters dashed and roared in its anxiety to reach the Yangtse, we came to an open clearing where a Chinese was growing a lot of fine sugar-cane. This farmer is a tenant of one of the Nosu landlords, and has managed to make himself liked by most of the hillmen. The red sugar-canes which he cultivates find a ready market, and are much more prized than the green canes which are usually seen in the West China sugar plantations. The young sprouts at the tops of the canes are used to feed cattle, and oxen and buffaloes are very fond of them. The large buffaloes which draw up the brine from the famous wells in Tzi Liu Ching, the most famous salt centre in the whole of China, are largely fed on these sugar-tops. The liking for these is not confined to
136 domestic animals only. One day some wild boars got into
224 Mr Yang's plantation, which we had just reached. The boars began ravenously to eat up the cane, and the owner and his men went out to see what the truoble was. The first animal they clearly saw they took for an ox. Yang worked his way through the canes, intending to coax the animal up to his house to await the inquiry of the owner. But on getting near the creature he saw it was an enormous old wild boar.

He shot it, and between them they gave it the *coup de grâce.* 136
It turned out to be the largest boar they had ever seen in 224
those parts, and weighed several hundred pounds. It was a regular old warrior. Where it had scratched its back against some fir-trees they compared and found it was as high as a man's shoulders.

We were very interested in the sugar-cane grown by Mr Yang, but we soon found something to interest us still more. It was he who told us the startling piece of news mentioned in Chapter I. From him we learned that messengers had already been sent across the river to arrange with the tribesmen for the murder of the Englishman and his chief companion. He told us further that the place where the attack might be made on our party was a little farther on in the valley where he was living, and that the Nosu chief who had been chosen to commit the deed had already come down to the valley. This startling news made us feel uncomfortable, and we wondered for a while what we should do. After all, we thought the story might not be true, and that it might only be an attempt on the part of the Chinaman to frighten us back from our endeavour to lift the veil from the unknown. Had we turned back and appeared at that famous ferry on that same day, how Mr Tien would have laughed and ridiculed us! We were not going to give him that satisfaction if we could possibly help it. We determined to push on and risk it. We had won in one game and we might win in th next.

The farther we went the more the valley opened out, and 241
at last we came to a stretch where were a lot of ricefields. The rice had been gathered in but the stalks were still standing. Only the ears had been cut off. In China every stalk

241 is gathered and used as fodder for the cattle, or in the making of the straw mats which are used on the beds of the people [231] all over the country. As fodder for cattle the Nosu hillmen prefer the wild grass of the hills, and as a bed-mat is a luxury these men do not indulge in, the rice straw is ploughed into the fields again.

342 Near the ricefields were a few houses, where dwelt the cultivators of these fields. A rough wall surrounded the houses, evidently as a defence against attack. On the wall sat a couple of Nosu with their long felt capes on, and as 000 they caught sight of me they burst into laughter. My black English suit was a never-ending source of amusement to the tribes-people. They had never seen a human being so dressed before. The nearest approach to such a dressed being was the black bear, which is very common among these hills. Again and again the people burst out with the cry: "A man black bear." One hunter told me one day that had he suddenly come across me in the woods he would unhesitatingly have shot me for a bear. I am very glad the constant presence of friends prevented such a catastrophe. When talking it over one night I could not help remarking that it would have been a great take-in for us both. To the hunter who shot the man for a bear the layer after layer of garments would have been a surprising revelation. It was something to my advantage that my appearance always provoked hearty laughter. A man who laughs heartily at you cannot get very angry with you, try he never so hard. More than one good story has been told of how foreigners in China have saved their lives by being able to provoke a merry laugh in those who were going to attack them. All the time we were in Nosuland good humour and laughter were the

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

order of the day. I determined, if possible, to like everything, OOO and to be as friendly as they would let me with everybody. In fact it was a jolly holiday all round, with no ill humour between hosts and guest all the time. We many times forgot that Mr Tien and the Defender of the Marches existed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST STOP IN NOSULAND

563 AT the end of the first day we stayed in a small farmstead where lived a Chinese tenant of one of the Nosu landlords. A mud wall surrounded the buildings, and an adobe tower spoke of risk and danger. The tenant, a Mr Liu, told us that his people had for six generations lived in the land of the Nosu and that they used to be better off than they are now. We all slept in a small room on the mud floor. 352 Here we were immediately up against the primitive customs of the people of this land. We found a delightful lack of furniture everywhere. There were no chairs, no tables, no forms, no beds. It was the simple life with a vengeance. 516 Everybody sat on the floor. For the older folks and guests nearly every house provides skins of the black bear. Sitting on these was a little better than sitting on the mud floor, but the skins got very hard after a while. After a few hours of this kind of sitting one's legs ached very much. I carried with me a small Chinese-made folding-chair, weighing three or four pounds, and it was a great relief to have this to sit on at times. To those who knew how, it was very easy to open or fold up this little chair, but those mountain folk found it very difficult to understand the simple mechanism that guided the opening and shutting. There was no end of fun with this little chair, and as every now and again it collapsed when not properly fixed, the onlookers roared with laughter as some adventurous young fellow for the first and possibly

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

the last time in his life tried what it was like to sit on a chair. 516 When one thinks of these people one is reminded of the advertisements which appear so frequently in the papers that find their way to this part of West China, where "'Varsity" and other kinds of chairs of all sizes and stages of comforts are pressed on the attention of the young men of England who will soon bear the burden of empire. We often grumble at the great burdens the white young men have to bear, but I fancy a return to something of the simplicity of many of the Oriental peoples would be a great advantage all round.

The lack of beds and bedding was very striking. In some 352 of the larger houses we entered we found that at one end 513 of the long room composing the house there was a corner screened off, and here was a rough bedstead where slept the heads of the household. The majority, however, slept around the wood fire, with feet facing the warmth. When a large number of them were thus sleeping they looked very like a huge cart-wheel, with the fire as the nave of the axle. Men and women all slept around the fire, dressed as they were in the daytime, covered by their felt cloaks if they possessed such, and uncovered if they had none. Apparently they slept well.

These people scorn the Chinese because they are so effem- 186 inate and must have comfort before they can get on. I do not know what they thought of me. I usually managed to get some straw on the floor and rolled myself up in my wadded quilt, the ordinary Chinese "pukai." Mr Long and I often lay in our pukais after the others had got up, and yarned away about many things. Just near to where I was sleeping the 235 first night was a large basket, in which rested some of the fowls

235 of the household. These fowls that sleep indoors are often a great nuisance to tired travellers. How mad they make 000 one feel sometimes! When travelling off the main roads in China one has often to put up with the poorest accommodation, and more than once, when too late to remedy matters, I have discovered that cocks and hens were all sleeping under my bed. What a mistake it is to imagine that cocks crow at dawn. I wish they did. Sometimes they seem to be studying the time-sheets of the principal ports of the world and start crowing at what is daybreak in those places. I have known one cock in West China start crowing when it is daybreak in Chicago, and then he kept on heralding dawn in all the principal places west of that city until at last he greeted the dawn of his native place. Nothing is more irritating than to be dreaming pleasantly after a hard and tiring day's journey and to be suddenly woke up by the thunderous roar of an old practised rooster, who is sleeping right under one's bed. You feel so jolly bad, and wish that you had not left your stick in the other corner of the room! At last you get some kind of a weapon and make the best dash you can at the midnight reveller, only to find that he is safely sheltered in a coop under the centre of the bed. You cannot get at him, do what you like. But you may disturb his song for a while, and then off you go to sleep until the sun is about to shine on San Francisco, and then there is the earthquake and thunder and lightning all over again. At last you give it up and wish very much that they would kill that fowl on the morrow and give you the privilege of crowing over him and eating him. You resolve ever after never to grumble at the tough old roosters that fall to your lot at so many evening meals in China, and make up your mind that you

will chuckle over and bite well every one that comes your 000
way as one less disturber of midnight dreams left in the world.

By-and-by Mr Long and I got up, and sat down under a 251
big mat by the side of the fire. A lot of peppercorns were 249
drying on the mat over the fire, and we had to get under it before we could get near the warmth. Not long before we arrived two leopards had attacked two cows belonging to Mr Liu while they were grazing on the hill-side. The men pursued and killed one on the spot, but the other got off.

We had intended to leave this place early in the morn- 000
ing, going about ten miles before breakfast. This plan, however, was stopped by the appearance of a Nosu chief, who insisted on detaining us. This was the man whom Chen, the warden of the Marches, had attempted to persuade to kill us if we persisted in crossing the Yangtse. Here was the suggested murderer at last. The Nosu chief looked wild enough to be the hero of any tragedy. I found out afterwards that he has done a few shady transactions in his life, and H. E. Chen's emissaries had chosen the right man when they tried to persuade Vri-ha to do their diabolical work. As far as we could see, this chief in detaining us had no ulterior motive. As soon as he got in touch with our party he determined not to carry out the wishes of the Chinese, for the present, at any rate. The detaining of us was merely that we might have breakfast at the chief's expense before we continued our journey. We soon got very friendly, and before long the strong, well-built man was giving me a whole list of Nosu words to write in my notebook. With Mr Long as interpreter and go-between, it was fairly easy to get hold of

000 a vocabulary. A few words go a long way at such times, and even blunders in the new speech only added to the fun of it all. If those who heard me did not feel offended at the funny mistakes I made when I tried to speak a few words to them, I am sure I did not mind their hearty laughter. It was as much fun to me as it was to them. At such times one can always get his own back by trying to get them to pronounce a few English words.

A small iron puzzle, a couple of corks and two small clockwork figures were my stock in trade when I wished to put the people into a good humour. One of the figures was a fiddler, and the other an old-fashioned Chinese soldier brandishing a sword in one hand and a spear in the other. The fame of these two figures preceded me wherever I went, and everybody demanded a performance of the marionettes. When a crowd of men and women squatted down and gave themselves up to a few minutes of excitement as the figures moved about in the little tray that was the theatre of their exploits, one thought at once it was a scene from Brobdingnag, where a group of giants were watching the movements of a pair of Gullivers. The hillmen evidently thought there was some life in the little figures. Sometimes, when I was tired of the constant excitement, I used to let my "boy" manage the show, while I went off for a stroll.

754 I took with me a few prettily dressed dollies, hoping to win the affection of some of the little girls of Nosuland by giving them these. But, to my great surprise, I could not give away a single one of these dolls. Here and there the children looked longingly, and one day a little girl was brave enough to take a doll from the visitor, but before many minutes were passed the mother brought the doll back again, and I had to

take it away with me. I was much taken aback at this and 754 wondered what the reason of this conduct was. In other places I have known even women go wild over a pair of dolls. Two that I had with me once were worn to pieces with constant nursing and curious pulling about. I remember one night a little girl begging me to let her take the doll home to bed with her just for the one night. She brought it back safely the next morn, glad of even one night's friendship with one of Santa Claus' most popular gifts.

I found out after a while that the fear of the doll was the fear of witchcraft. When there is illness about, especially when the disease is contagious, the wizard is called in, and he makes a kind of doll of straw, etc., and into this doll he charms the demon of the disease. The straw figure is then taken out and placed by the roadside. Before long the demon is supposed to pass into some one or other of the passers-by, and in that case the person originally ill recovers rapidly. It was the fear of the wizard's straw figure that made my prettily dressed dollies so unpopular. I suppose down in the hearts of some of the people there was the fear that I was some powerful medicine man who could bewitch with the little figures in scarlet and blue. Fancy a land where the little girls are afraid to play with a doll! Surely there cannot be another such land anywhere about. One can see by this incident that any missionary in Nosuland would have to reckon on possible opposition from the all-powerful wizard class. I would risk it all gladly to win the little girls and deliver them from such an unnatural fear.

While we were enjoying ourselves with the moving figures 574 the chief's men had been preparing breakfast. At nine A.M. one of his slaves came in leading a fine goat by a string, and

574 at eleven we were all making a hearty meal off the flesh of this goat. To one at home who goes to a shop for all his meat, and usually likes it to hang a day or two (let alone a month or two) before it is eaten, it seemed strange to see a goat or a pig alive at the beginning of one hour and all cooked and eaten by the end of the second hour. They do a few things quicker in the East than they do in the West.

Under the influence of the hearty meal we all got very friendly and chummy. The chief Vri-ha, who had prepared breakfast for us, apologised for not coming to meet us the day before. Had he known, so he said, he would have brought seven hundred men to escort us. We might have been captured by robbers in that silvery stream valley, and then he would have been very much ashamed. I suggested it was better not to have had the seven hundred men, as in that case the Chinese might have really believed that the foreign visitor had come across with political designs.

Soon after those of us who had come across the river sang a couple of Chinese hymns. Our audience was as wise at the end of the singing as they were at the beginning. So we set to work to try and translate one of the hymns into Nosu. Vri-ha helped us. It was most interesting to see this strong wildman, who had been enticed to become our deadly enemy, helping to translate one of the Christian hymns into his own language. I do not know what he thought of it all. When we sang the translated verses in Nosu there was great fun and laughter. There was not much reverence shown by any of the people. But that did not worry us in the least at that early stage. We wanted everybody, if possible, to feel friendly and jolly with the visitor, and we knew in such a case they could not think unkindly of any part of the visitor's message. It was fun and friendship with them, and if the missionary's message could reach these hillmen's hearts in that way I think the method a great improvement on some earlier and rougher methods of propagation. I do not for a moment think laughter and joy and high spirits and a lot of fun with the children are out of place in a missionary's work.

So the first morning passed away, and then we started off again still farther into Nosuland. The veil was very slowly lifted, and there was not much mystery after all.

CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE PROPOSALS AND THE WATER-SUPPLY

000 WE had not gone very far on our day's journey before Mr Long discovered that he had left his large sun-hat behind. Then our men began shouting back to some men on a ridge opposite, asking them to shout the news to others, so that the hat might be brought up. While we were waiting I took a photo of the group, with the missionary holding the hand of the chief who was asked to kill him. We were already getting quite chummy, moving on towards the romantic plot which was to make the Britisher and the Nosu relatives and friends for life, if the plot had only come off.

Those travelling with me gave out that I was a Nosu like they were, and that I had come across to see how my brethren were and to bring them some wonderful news which had already transformed a great part of the world and made it possible for men to dream of the day when all will be brethren and the "whole world under heaven one family." The people knew at once that I was not Chinese, and therefore I must be Nosu. When they also heard that my wife had "big" feet, and wore a long skirt, there was no further doubt about the matter. A man whose wife has big feet and wears long skirts could not but be a Nosu, and so I was admitted into the ranks at once and was treated as a real "black"-ranked hillman. As to the size of the feet, one of the greatest pleasures of my journey in Nosuland was the sight of healthy women and girls tripping about with natural feet.

The foreigner who has seen how Chinese little girls have their feet bound never gets used to the lily feet of the celestials, and the slow walk of these sisters never calls forth his admiration. Chinese women, by beautifully embroidered shoes, by highly coloured ankle bands, by strikingly loud silk trousers trimmed with rich braid, try to make their lower extremities attractive, and in some way not understood by foreigners have succeeded in doing so. Even in country villages, where one would expect the details of fashion would not have much control, the young men seeking wives are influenced by the size of the foot. The girl with a three-inch-sole shoe and an ugly face has a better chance in the matrimonial market than a five-inch-sole-shoed girl who might have a face like a Madonna. There is no accounting for the taste of some men. Fashion is supposed to rule women, but men are just as big slaves to fashion, at least at some times.

How to get all the young people happily married is a problem that often worries a missionary who makes himself one with his people. In my own diocese I have thousands of children and young people, and in some districts the Christian girls are more numerous than the Christian young men. Heathen men are willing to marry these girls, but that way out of a difficulty is only taken in very rare instances. The whole weight of the Church is thrown into the scale against such a solution. One of our Christian girls was getting quite an old maid, having reached the age of twenty-eight. Several heathen had asked for her, but she refused them all. Then we tried to get a Christian from another district to propose.

000 One Christmas we got a number of the girls from the places where bridegrooms are scarce to come and spend a few days at the central station, hoping that their fresh, attractive manners would lead to some proposals being made in the regular Oriental way. One of our preachers approached a country tenant farmer and tried to persuade him to ask for the twenty-eight-year-old lady. We all thought it would come off. The man was about the same age as the lady in question, and had not yet succeeded in getting engaged. But, to our surprise, he would have nothing to do with the plan, and gave as his reason: "Who would marry a girl with a skirt like that?" The girl in question had her skirt embroidered in a different way to the girls and women in the village where the particular swain lived, and he felt that he dared not make such an innovation on the fashions of his own village. Men also are sometimes big fools when fashion is in question. A beautiful pair of brown eyes, long fine black hair and a good Christian character counted as nothing against a strange style of skirt embroidery!

622 Away on some uplands, opposite the slope where we rested.
628 waiting for the forgotten hat, one could see a number of burnt houses which had evidently been standing not long ago. Some few days' journey away lived a powerful chief named Too, one of the Earth Eyes. the great overlords the story of whose doings would fill many books. This overlord Too had in the past few years been trying to make himself head of all the clans in the southern part of Nosuland. A number of the minor chiefs had willingly paid taxes to him, but he now demanded rent as well, and to this the people strongly demurred. In the spring he had appeared with a thousand men and had burned all the houses in the district we were looking

on. He had prepared to march farther inland, intending 622
to pursue the same tactics, but a number of the clans gathered 628
their fighting men together and waited for Too on a hill, the
approach to which was up a steep cliff. Overlord Too
evidently thought discretion was the better part of valour,
and retired. These quarrels about the land will in the end
lead to the Chinese rulers seizing the whole of it and destroying
the independence of Nosuland. I heard an aborigine
story a few days ago to this effect. A tit and a wren were
quarrelling about a nest of young birds, each claiming them
as her offspring. At last, being unable to settle the quarrel
of themselves, they appealed to the black-coated raven, who
held a kind of official position among the birds. The raven
ordered the nest of young birds to be brought to him, and one
half expected the story to develop into a kind of variation
of the famous decision of Solomon. This, however, is China
and not Judea. The raven promptly devoured the young
birds, and when he had finished he said: "That is the end
of that lawsuit." The tit and the wren went away wiser
than they came.

As we climbed higher up among the hills we passed several 137
groves of dwarf oak-trees. These dwarf oak-trees are a feature
of many of the hills of West China. Now and again one 000
comes across a larger oak-tree, but the terrible and insane
warfare waged against all woods in China makes the presence
of all giant trees very rare. We have often seen men carrying
bundles of the large leaves of these dwarf oak-trees, and
wondered what they were being used for. We found out that
in the Yangtse Valley, near Nosuland, on the Chinese side of
the river, a very popular brown sugar is made from the cane.
The little cakes of brown sugar, weighing about three or four

000 ounces each, are much prized, and are carried great distances, finding a ready sale even in the province of Szechuan, where sugar-cane is one of the chief products of this, China's richest and largest province. Some peculiarity in the cane of Szechuan prevents this brown sugar being made, and by a kind of carrying-coals-to-Newcastle and finding-a-ready-market style, the coarse brown sugar of Yunnan is eagerly bought up right in the midst of the immense cane-fields of the sister province. The leaves of the dwarf oaks are used to wrap up the little brown cakes of sugar.

In still another province bordering on Yunnan there is a silkworm which feeds on these leaves, and from the cocoons of these worms is produced a very strong silk, nearly as good as, but hardly so highly finished as, the famous Shantungs so well known in Europe. Some of this silk we have sent to friends in England, who have made it into children's dresses, and it has been almost impossible to wear these dresses out.

231 We found a large number of sheep grazing on the Nosu
291 hills, and among them a number of black ones. These black sheep formed quite a striking feature on the hill-sides. From the wool of these sheep the Nosu make their famous felt capes. The Yunnan Chinese and the other aborigines constantly wear felt capes in winter or rainy weather, but theirs are of a much coarser make than those worn by the independent Nosu. The Chinese capes are usually white or dyed blue. The Nosu capes are always a blackish brown, very much the colour of walnut stain.

462 As we were walking on towards our night's resting-place
482 we passed several girls and women, carrying water. A large
312 tub is carried on the back by a rope over the shoulders, the

tub resting on the small of the back. This water-carrying 462
business is one of the heaviest burdens the women have to 482
bear, and often the distance from the house to the water is 312
very great. I have known some places where the girls have to travel nearly two hours before they are back home with the tub of water. They carry it very dexterously, scarcely ever spilling any of the water over the rim of the tub. Frequently, however, there is a leak, and then the clothes get wet, of which no notice is taken until rheumatic or other pains warn the water-carriers that something has gone wrong. A village near a constantly running spring has a great advantage over one distant from water. I have known girls 581
base their "yes" or "no," in reply to a proposal, on the nearness or distance of the water-supply at the village of the would-be bridegroom. The man who looks after my horses was the second to propose in one day to his present wife. The girl accepted the first, not knowing that there was a second proposal to come the same day. When the second one reached her she immediately realised that the water-supply of the second man's village was close to the houses and she bitterly regretted that she had so readily agreed to the first proposal. In some way or other she broke off the first engagement, and went to marry the man whose chief asset was the near water-supply of his village. Possibly he does not feel flattered when he remembers how he managed to win his wife; or, possibly, he never thinks anything about it, content with things as they are; or again, he may put down his success over his rival to his superior charms. Who knows? Who dares to be dogmatic in matter concerning a man and a girl and the great elusive mystery of the latter's heart and attractive ways?

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177 I asked my companion and guide, Mr Long, whether these women and girls would not prefer to live in Chinese territory, where there are more people and markets and towns, and supplies of clothing are more easily procured. He laughed, and said the women preferred the free life of the hills away from the Chinese, and would not change their lot if they could possibly help it. The pure Nosu woman would never think of marrying a Chinese. There are some cases of slave girls marrying Chinese, and the masters at times encourage this, because the Chinese then tends to become a slave also, at the disposal of the girl's master. Mr Long had a slave girl, a white Nosu, who was given to a Chinese tailor who came to the house seeking work. When the affair was finally settled the tailor agreed to give sixty days of free tailoring each year to Mr Long's second wife in return for the privilege of marrying the girl. When the tailor could save up enough money he was going to purchase and so free his wife. He had offered sixteen ounces of silver but the girl's mistress had stuck out for twenty ounces, and when I was there no bargain had yet been completed. I heard later on that the girl repented that she had agreed to be married to the Chinese tailor but she had been unable to get out of the engagement. Though there are a few cases such as this, the Nosu as a rule intermarry with Nosu.

000 Chatting away, and learning all I could about the land and the people, we began to near the end of the day's journey. Some of the latter part of the road was very bad. There was one lot of rocks we had to climb around, where they say even monkeys have to be shod with iron shoes before they can climb over it. We managed to negotiate the monkey-puzzling cliffs without mishap, and soon after came to a great pine-

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

tree eighty feet high. Last year an old man nearly seventy 000
years of age had climbed up this tree to prune some of the top branches. Tree-climbing is one of the things these aborigines of West China are expert at. I have seen boys go up tall trees like a set of monkeys. When I saw some boys climb nimbly up tall pine-trees with all the lower branches cut away I thought they looked like the natives of the Malay States, who climb the palms with great dexterity and celerity.

Snow fell towards evening, and we finished our day's journey 712
with the white flakes falling everywhere, and so there was no chance of photographing the village where we were to stop the night. A fine wall surrounded the village, and the wall was loopholed all around with slanting holes. These loopholes were about the height of one's shoulder, and everything was ready for the repelling of a sudden attack.

We found at this village that the Nosu people do not use 436
the copper cash which are found all over China, and that 437
barter is in full swing. When we were there salt was largely the medium of exchange. The salt used was the black variety produced at Tsi Liu Ching and exported over so wide an area in West China. One catty of salt purchased four catties of honey. Two catties of salt purchased one catty of bees-wax. Two catties of salt purchased one of small dried mushrooms, the kind so much used in the *recherché* feasts of China. Two of salt also purchased one of raw hide. Labour was also paid for in salt. The comparative dearness of salt, none of which was produced in the parts of Nosuland I visited, made it too valuable an article to be often eaten, and much of the food consumed by the people is never flavoured with salt.

The Nosu say that the flabbiness of the Chinese men, and their inability to cope with the Nosu in enduring hardness, is due to an excessive eating of salt. Now, however, that the Central Government has begun to tax salt very heavily and is likely to tax it still more, the West China Chinese are likely to approach the Nosu more nearly in their sparing use of a salt diet. To put it very mildly, the Government salt policy is one that has not the welfare of the poor people at heart, and is likely to produce complications that are not yet clearly foreseen. When a man has to pay a day and a half's wages for a pound of salt in a country where there are abundant sources of salt-supply, something must be wrong.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

CHAPTER X

SUPPER À LA NOSU

WE stayed the night at Chie-tsu Leh-chieh, the 354 village with the loopholed wall around it. The 415 home where we found a welcome was that of an uncle of one of the Nosu travelling with us. Passing through a courtyard, we were shown into a long room with scarcely any furniture in it. There was a large stone fireplace in the floor at one end, and on the fire was a large iron tripod, about two feet in diameter. On this was resting an enormous iron pan, similar to those the Chinese use nearly all over the country. There was a wood fire in full blaze, and the sight of it to the travellers coming out of the falling snow was very cheering and welcome.

The lady of the house was squatting on the floor on one side of the fire. Her long skirt was spread out around her. Two other women were near by, busy with the fire and the big iron pan on the tripod. There was a long straw mat 352 on the side of the fire facing the lady of the house, and here we sat down, getting as near to the fire as we could, for it was very cold indeed. We sat watching the fire and wondering how long it would take to cook the huge steamer of rice that was resting in the iron pan on the huge tripod.

I noticed that none of the men about the place had any 302 whiskers or moustache, and was told that the Nosu men do not consider it right to grow these. The hairs are all pulled out in early manhood, and never allowed to grow, except in

302 very rare cases, when, in order to circumvent some peculiarly obnoxious demon, the hair is allowed to grow in the natural way. I wonder if anyone has ever got right to the back of the wizard's mind which governs all these matters. Much of what these wizards say and do seems absurd, and often very ridiculous, and yet they have their system of philosophy and their reason for doing things. I expect the idea of allowing the hairs to grow is to deceive the demon into thinking the hairy person is not a Nosu, and so out of the particular jurisdiction of that feared denizen of the dark world. The Chinese often dress a baby boy in girl's clothes so as to make the evil sprites fancy the baby is only a girl and not worth paying attention to. Most ungallant are the sprites of the underworld, and their education is decidedly not up to twentieth-century standard. One is half tempted to ask whether they have yet got the . . .—but one refrains.

574 At twenty minutes to seven there was a great commotion. Men and women began to talk excitedly. A number who had been squatting around the fire on which the tripod rested got up and moved to one side. It was as if they were making way for the arrival of another guest. On inquiry I was informed that they were about to bring in my supper. When one is hungry, what a fascinating word that word supper is! We were all very hungry, and I wondered what supper *à la* Nosu would be like.

[231] While I was wondering and waiting several men came in through the door, leading a fine fat goat. As the cattle of the households of these aboriginals often sleep under the same roof as the people of the farm, and sometimes quite close to the men and women, there was nothing very unusual about a goat coming into the room where I and others were to sleep.

This goat, however, was not at all anxious to come, for the fold was in another part of the premises. He did not seem at all desirous to make the acquaintance of the foreign visitor, and evidently only wanted to get back to the fold, where his comrades were resting and trying to get warm while the snow was falling outside.

That was the supper, all alive and walking very reluctantly into the centre of the large room in the direction of the fireplace where rested the iron tripod. It is a most uncanny sensation to have one's supper walk on its own legs towards one. I was very, very hungry, but I was a man and not a wolf, and did not quite feel like dining as the monarchs of the forest and the robbers of the hill-side dine. Just then one could have sat down gladly to such a supper as one can get in certain places in the Strand, and I am sure with my eager appetite I could have done justice to all the waiter put before me. How different the scene now! The long, dark room, with no lamps and only the light of the blazing fire; no tables with clean white cloths, and sparkling glasses and brightly polished cutlery! In moments of weakness, or when one wants to conjure up a striking contrast to one's present position, one allows oneself to wander in thought to some of the places where he has rested and refreshed himself in years gone by. Many a time I have remembered a certain place in Moscow where I once had supper, and while I was having it I remarked to one of my companions that if I could suddenly transport some of my West China poor friends to the hall in which we were then sitting they would think that at last they had reached the heaven their missionary has sometimes told them about. You may think this is all by the way, and has nothing to do with supper *à la* Nosu. It is just because

000 it has nothing to do with it that I am writing it. The longer one can put off the description of the walking supper the better one is pleased. In those places that one sometimes from sheer contrariness thinks about, it is the well-groomed waiter that brings in the supper. Here the supper brought itself in, and the foreigner lifting the veil in search of adventures was to get a shock before he and supper made closer acquaintance.

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231 I watched the scene with great interest, wondering what was going to happen next. Inexpressible, confounded horrors! What in the world are they going to do? There was no time to wonder any longer. Right in front of where we were sitting they proceeded to throw the goat down and kill it. The knife was very blunt and the slaughtering was clumsily done. The whole affair was barbarous. The man stopped right in the midst of the killing to sharpen his knife. It was a most nauseous sight, and I would gladly have kicked the whole show out into the snow or run away myself. But I had determined to grumble at nothing and to go through with it all, whatever might happen. I felt, however, I owed a deep apology to the poor animal who had so ceremoniously been led into the presence of the foreigner whose coming had brought such disaster to it.

Turning away from the scene, I looked into the flames of the cheery fire and read therein pictures very different from the scenes being enacted close by. If anyone has a fancy for taking his supper in a slaughter-house let him pay a visit to Nosuland and win his way into the hearts of this strange, interesting, brave people.

As soon as the goat had been skinned and fairly well cleaned, the head and legs were cut off. The head was thrown into

the fire to burn itself clean, and the legs were given to the 574 231
children. I was told the children always had the legs as their
perquisite. They burnt these in the fire until the hair was 574
all gone and the meat was warmed through, and then ate 252
them with great relish. Not a trace of salt did they have
with the burnt legs. Presently one of the men brought over
the lungs, heart, kidneys, etc., and burnt these for a very short
time in the ashes of the wood fire. They were then taken out, [415]
cut up into pieces, put on a wooden trencher with a high
stand and presented to Mr Long and me. This was a mark
of respect to us, and there was no way out of it. Mr Long
was quite ready to partake of the dish, and I imitated him.
The half-cooked, saltless meat was very sweet and had quite
a flavour of its own. When one had overcome one's first
reluctance there was nothing to find fault with.

It is considered the correct thing to kill the supper animal in the presence of the guest. The guest then knows for a certainty that it is for his particular benefit that the animal has been prepared, and he can also be sure that the goat is not a diseased one and that the meat is not some old remains which a former guest has been unable to eat. If a second party of guests arrives on the same day a second animal is killed and cooked with the same ceremony.

At twenty minutes to eight the meat had been all cut up, 574
and it was all placed in the huge pan of boiling water over 252
the wood fire. All the meat is cooked at once, and if possible 415
eaten at the one meal. Nothing should be left over. The
host wants it to be known that he is caring only for his guest
and is not thinking at all about his own needs. While the
meat was cooking one of the household girls every now and
again turned it over with a large wooden spoon. The spoon

[252] [415] 574 was more than two feet in length and about ten inches wide in the ladle. It would have made a magnificent jam spoon.

At the prospect of supper before long everybody began to feel more comfortable and to brighten up considerably. The girls and women of the household were quite friendly, and very willing to explain anything they were doing or to show me anything they were using. Conversation became brisk, and every now and again, at some funny remark, rows of beautifully white teeth that set one longing for a similar set smiled in a fascinating way. It was nice to see that the women were frank and open and not afflicted with a false shyness. In China it is most disconcerting to have nearly all the women turn their faces aside if you address them on any subject, and, if they should be young women, perhaps look black, in addition, and refuse to answer you. These Nosu women will smile and look you square in the face as if you were one of their own family. An experience like that reminds one of home, and brings a very comforting feeling to one.

[291] The lady of the house had a large cloak of sheep's fur, worn fur outwards, over her clothes. She was a widow, and conducted herself with great kindness and dignity. What she really thought inside I do not know, but I fancy she felt we were doing her a kindness in coming to visit her. These people do not like to be left alone, and the number and rank of their guests show the rank they hold in the social scale. This horror of being left alone is common to al' peoples in China. There is a great longing for company, and "cold loneliness," as it is termed, is the state detested most of all.

Just before the meat was considered sufficiently cooked

several bunches of dried holly were brought in and thrown 574
on the fire. The blaze and crackling of the holly put an air of delightful brightness over everything. It was like a fanfare of trumpets heralding the approach of the most important guest of all. Everybody was now on the alert. Even a few sleepers, who, in their tiredness, had gone to rest at the other end of the room, woke up and prepared for the event of the evening.

The meal was served up on the ground, reminding one of a 576
fresher's "squash" at Cambridge, but while the viands were 264
as easily reached as in the undergraduates' rooms, there were 415
none of the comfortable seats for the guests. First a small
solid wooden tray was placed on the ground in front of us, ✓
and in this were three wooden dishes. All these were made of camphor wood and rudely painted in several colours. One of the dishes contained rice, piled up in pyramid fashion. The second contained eight pounds of the cooked goat, cut in pieces of from half-a-pound to one pound in size. The third contained gravy. Two wooden spoons about ten inches long were placed by the side of the dishes. The two principal guests, Mr Long and the Englishman, were invited to begin. The other guests and their retainers were eating on the floor near by, while the family waited until everybody else had finished. Salt was very sparingly used, and in the gravy which the members of the family took with their meal no salt was put at all.

Negotiating the pyramid of rice with our two spoons was 576
not a very easy task. Care has to be taken that the rice is 264
not spilled nor allowed to run off the wooden basins. By going slowly and carefully we managed to carry out this part of the programme. The difficult task was with the meat. How

576 to eat huge junks of meat, half-a-pound or more in size, with
264 a wooden spoon, might well puzzle a traveller. There was, of course, only one way to do this, and that way we both took. It was most awkward and most amusing. When Mr Long and I were both gnawing *à la* Nosu at huge pieces of the goat that had walked in so reluctantly not long ago we could not see each other. And to tell the truth, meat cooked in Nosu fashion is very tough, and those lovely white, shining, sharp teeth which had laughed across the fire at the man dressed in black like a bear were not to be borrowed for the occasion. When you have finished your piece of meat the bone that is left is slung by the guest right across the room to the door, where the fierce, wolfish watch-dogs are eagerly awaiting their share of the feast. The dogs had a surprise that night, and on several succeeding nights, as long as I stayed in this most interesting country. Instead of well-picked bones the dogs frequently got fine pieces of splendid meat, which must have been a surprising change to them.

000 A Methodist minister who used to travel many years ago in the Scilly Isles had a monotonous round of dinners in the various homes of his people he used to visit. Cold fat salt pork was the invariable *pièce de resistance*, and that was the one thing in the whole food world which he abominated. But he told how under the spotlessly white deal table the dog of the house used to rest at dinner-time. By telling an interesting story it was very easy to turn the attention of the kind, too-pressing hostess on to some other line, and then the dog under the table had his welcome shock as the pieces of rich fat pork were slipped off the minister's plate. Such feats of domestic conjuring were a great help to the Methodist itinerant, and won for him the eternal friendship of the house-dogs.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

[Plate facing p. 112]

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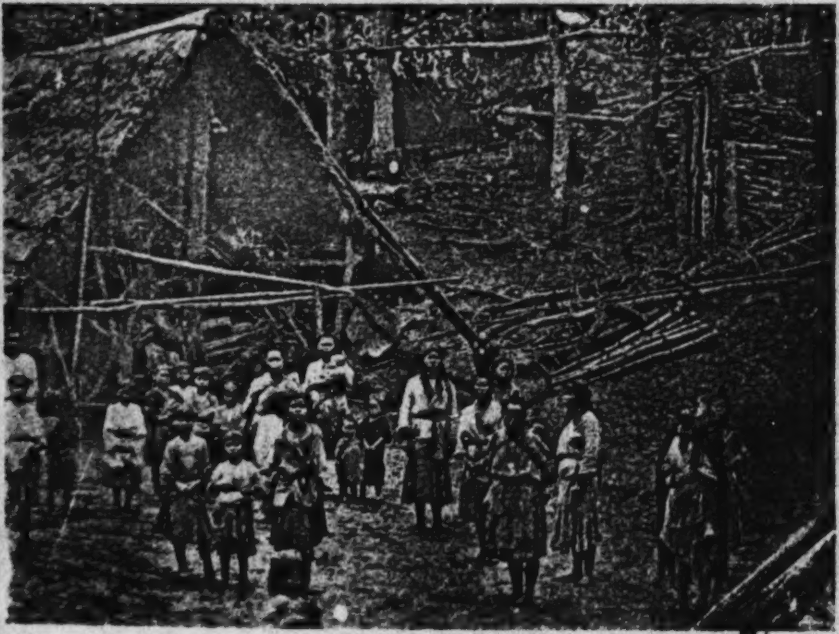
A GROUP SHOWING HOW THE HILLMEN FIGHT



AN ABORIGINAL VILLAGE

The end of the house is almost entirely open to wind and rain.

574 In a very short time the supper was over. The goat that had walked in was almost forgotten. Guests crowded around the fire once more, and all tongues were busy with that conversation that never comes to an end but goes on for ever and helps to make this world the happy, interesting place it frequently is.

With the end of the supper the duties of the evening did not cease. At about eleven o'clock there was a magic-lantern display. It was given in the room where we had had our novel and satisfying supper. One can hardly describe what this magic-lantern display meant to the people of Nosuland. They are full of superstition. and altogether under the rule of the wizards who are in touch with the demon world and adepts in the black art. Right into the midst of such a people comes the black-dressed foreigner with his magic-lantern, and one can easily guess what a surprise and a startling awakening it was for the people. Cries of pleasure, roars of laughter, exclamations of surprise, shrinkings of fear, shouts of wonder succeeded each other for an hour. What the total effect was I can only guess. What the wizards thought I do not know. It is necessary, if one wants to get the best influence over the tribesmen, to convince them that one is not only not afraid of the wizards but that one knows a few more things than those men who have had the field to themselves for so many years. In the end the wizard has to take a very second place.

CHAPTER XI

THE FARMSTEAD IN THE VALLEY

576 THE lantern display was finished about midnight. Soon after we lay down on the floor and went to sleep. The night was very cold, and some of the people felt it a good bit. The next morning we were up at half-past six. Going outside, we found the whole country-side white with snow. The rule among these hill-people is that if you have had supper at a house you leave before breakfast the next morning. There is always one meal free for any who come, but, except in special cases, not more. Following the custom of the country, we left early, hoping to get breakfast some- 313 where farther on. We passed a number of villages on our 439 way and saw many fine trees. One who only travels on the main roads of Yunnan sadly misses the trees. Sylvan scenery, of which Lord Beaconsfield rightly said one never tires, is almost absent. Huge cliffs, limestone rocks, rushing mountain torrents abound, but these do not make up for the absent trees. Here in Nosuland we found many trees of great size. The war against these trees has also commenced. Many of them are cut down and sawn into huge, heavy coffin boards, which are carried down to the Yangtse and then sold to the Chinese. They are then transported to the busy centres of [764] North Yunnan, and command heavy prices. As the Nosu go in for cremation and set no store by these insanely heavy coffins, the trees have had a long respite. Now the Chinese have denuded their own hills of most of the large trees they

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

have gone farther afield, and are willing to pay the Nosu 313
very generously for the wood grown north of the 439
Yangtse.

Why the Chinese set such store by these huge, ungainly coffins one does not know. Why a dead man should be happier in a coffin with sides in parts a foot thick rather than in one with sides an inch thick passes a Westerner's comprehension. And when you see countrymen toiling up the seven or eight thousand feet from the river to the hills near Chaotung, bearing on their backs huge boards of immense weight, which tire them and bring on premature old age, you wish that the Chinese in their funeral customs were not so bound down in slavery to old-age customs. Possibly with the changes which are now rapidly coming over the land reform in burial matters may make some headway. We were sorry to see this demand for large coffins causing the cutting down of many of the finest trees in the woods of Nosuland.

With boots and stockings soaking, through walking in the 574
snow, we at last reached a farmhouse in the See-tieh Valley. Here lived an old man well versed in Nosu folk-lore and tradition. We had arranged to stay a few days at his farm, hoping to gather a lot of valuable information about the hill-people. The old man's name was Ah-Pooh, and his wife's name was Ah-Hleh. A number of men were waiting at the outer gateway of the farm, and as we passed by they roared with laughter at the strange black-bear being who had come to be a guest at Ah-Pooh's home. We also joined in the laughter, and felt quite safe with folk who could laugh so heartily. I had never suspected that a suit of black clothing would cause such fun. If one could always rely on such a suit producing

574 such health-giving, friend-making mirth, I would take care
never to be without a supply of such suits.

342 The room we were shown into was fifty feet long, and there
354 was no opening at all for light except the one door in the
centre. We found everything quite dark, and could not see
one another until our eyes got accustomed to the want of
light. We made our way to the fireplace, which was the usual
hole in the mud floor. We were glad to squat down in the
warmth by the side of the burning logs. It was a treat to
get one's shoes and stockings off and to warm one's feet by
the comforting fire. The master and mistress of the house
were both over seventy years of age, and were tall, finely built
people. The son's wife came in soon after and joined the
291 group around the fire. She had on a blue jacket and a quilted
skirt, and wore an enormous head-dress. This latter was
made by winding layer after layer of dark blue native cloth
around a small frame. Sometimes nearly a hundred feet
of this cloth is so wound round the head. The width of the
cloth is a little more than a foot. The weight of the head-dress
is nearly six pounds, and must be a great burden until
one is used to it. Compared with some of the light-as-a-feather
hats worn by Western women, this is a great burden
indeed, which one fancies is the cause of many headaches.
The women, however, do not seem to mind it, and as a crown
to their tall figures the head-dresses are both striking and
picturesque.

000 We had been promised a good time at Ah-Pooh's farm-stead,
and had imagined all the stores of folk-lore and legend
and history we were to gather together. But we had indeed
reckoned without our host. The old man was very fond of
wine and the Chinese of the market village where we had

crossed the ferry had sent a spy across to see what the 000
foreigner was doing in Nosuland. Other messengers had been sent elsewhere to plot against us and to get us into trouble. Mr Tien had lost in the first game but he was not willing by any means to own that he had lost the rubber. We were to hear more of this enemy before we got safely back home again. The spy came by a shorter way to See-tieh than we had, and so he had reached the place before our arrival. In a very simple way he had blocked our plans. He had given the old man a present of a jar of samshu. The old man, in the presence of this temptation, had promptly succumbed, and when we arrived he was quite drunk, and remained more or less so all the time we stayed at the farmstead. When, later on, they were trying to tell him about the wonders of the magic-lantern, he replied: "I don't care about it a bit, all I want is 'Give me more to drink.'" It was a great disappointment to have our sources of information so effectually dammed up. There was no help for it, and we did the best we could without the old man. As for Mr Tien, I am afraid some of us did not feel very sweetly disposed towards him.

Coming along that day towards Ah-Pooh's home, one of 628
the Nosu travelling with us pointed to a spot where some 695
years before he had seen a great trial by ordeal. When an accusation is brought against anyone there is often an appeal to the ordeal. If the affair is one between two families a slave is chosen from each side, and these two have to undergo the ordeal. The two sides gather together in some selected spot and the wizards direct the operations. A huge wood fire is lighted and on this is placed a large iron pan of water. This water is boiled until the steam rises in clouds. An egg

628 is then thrown into the centre of the boiling water. The
695 slave champions then come forward. In turn each has to attempt to snatch the egg out of the water, using only the bare hand and arm to do so. The actual snatching is preceded by the chanting of the assembled wizards and by a protest of innocence on the part of both sides. Providence is expected to favour the innocent by blowing the steam away from their champion, towards the other side, and by some remarkable movement at the same time blowing the egg towards the edge of the pan nearest him. It is easy in such a case to snatch the egg out without harm. Burning of the hand and arm is taken as a sign of guilt.

This Nosu trial by ordeal is somewhat similar to that so common among the Chinese. With the latter oil is often used instead of water. The champions have to thrust their arms into the boiling oil, and the absence of burning is similarly taken as the sign of innocence. Needless to say, it is nothing of the kind.

618 When we got comfortably settled into Ah-Pooh's home,
621 and had got used to the light of the darkness, we began to find out a few particulars about the people with whom we were staying. We were told that Ah-Pooh had two sons living, five grandsons and two granddaughters. His clan of the Nhe family numbered nearly six hundred young fighting men. The neighbouring family, the La-chee, could muster fifteen hundred. All these people were very keen on preventing the chief Too, the leader in the great burning raid, from lording it over them. They were very anxious to know whether I could help them to bring about a better state of affairs, in which they could go about their daily rounds peaceably. It turned out later on that it was easier to help

them than we imagined. Chief Too also did not live very 618
long after the raid, and the villages which we visited suffered 621
no more from his ambitious projects.

The magic-lantern, the telescope, the camera and the tall 000
Munchausen stories my companions told evidently convinced the people that the bear-like Nosu from the land of the sunset was a man having control of great powers, which would be very advantageous to those who were fortunate enough to gain his assistance. It is an amusing situation to be placed in, when those around you fancy you are somebody you are not. They wish very much that you should play up to the rôle they have in their imagination assigned to you. How many times in China has one been placed in such a situation! And how often has a missionary come a bad cropper when he has tried, out of the kindness of his heart, to be what his friends wanted him to be. I was only too willing and ready to render all the help I could to the hospitable hill-people, but the greatest of helps I wished to render them was not just what they were at that time wanting. There was an idea among a number of these people that if they could only get in a friendly outsider who was not mixed up in any of their land quarrels, and who wished them all well, possibly this disinterested friend might pull them all together and settle their constant tribal fightings which some were wise enough to see were weakening them all. By-and-by their plans unfolded themselves more clearly, and a scheme was devised which some of the wise ones thought would exactly achieve their purposes.

The first thing done was to adopt me into one of the clans 597
and give me a Nosu name. This I readily agreed to, and was 123
glad to be an adopted son of the great Nhe clan, rejoicing in

597 the name of Nhe-jah-jah. This multiplicity of names is
123 one novel feature in a missionary's life in West China. To
my home friends I am known by the name my parents gave
me long ago. For more than half of my life I have lived
among people who would never know me by that name but
who recognise me at once by a name that neither my father
nor mother knew anything about. Later on a change of
work led me to another people, and they promptly gave me a
name of their own coining, which again would not be known
among the Chinese, and now here among the Nosu I had still
a fourth appellation. It is most interesting, but rather bewildering.
As Nhe-jah-jah, I was thenceforth known among
those independent Nosu, and I counted it an honour to be
reckoned as one of themselves even though I became kinsman
of the old sinner who got so drunk when his guests came.
He was not the only relative by adoption; there were others
who were more interesting and not quite so old, and also not
quite so fond of spirits.

574 The cold weather outside and the presence of the guests
within made the fireplace a welcome rendezvous for many.
There was an inner circle of about a dozen of us around the
fire, and a second still more numerous circle standing at our
backs, deeply interested in all that was going on. We were
joined soon by the widowed eldest daughter of Ah-pooh,
301 who had come across to see the guests. She was the mother
554 of three sons, and was gorgeously dressed. There is no doubt
about these Nosu ladies knowing how to dress. From each
ear she had more than a dozen silver chains hanging down,
and, to my great surprise, a silver brooch fastened the front
~~of her long~~ jacket. All the women wear these brooches.
Those of the servants are of brass and those of the mistresses

of silver. If I had only had a gold brooch to present to 301
this widowed lady I think I could have won her respect 554
for ever.

But while one admired the gorgeous dress and the silver 276
ear-rings and the brooch and the massive roll of cloth that crowned the head, there was one thing about the lady that one did not quite relish. She was smoking, and evidently was very fond of her five-feet-long pipe. A five-feet-long pipe in the pretty mouth of a beautifully dressed, handsome woman was a shocker. We associate ladies smoking at home with a delicate cigarette and graceful, curling wreaths of white vapour. But here they have left the initial stages behind long ago, and use a pipe five feet long. The mother was also smoking a pipe, but hers was only four feet long. Several of the men were smoking short pipes with a wide bowl, similar to the pipes used in England and such as are never seen in China, where the bowl is usually a tiny one, able to contain only a pinch of the shaved tobacco. When a Chinaman is hard up he will use almost anything to smoke with. One of some chair-men was stopping one day by the roadside, and had no pipe with which to indulge in the smoke he was longing for. But I soon saw that he was a man of resource and not easily nonplussed when smoking was at stake. He went to a garden near by, broke off part of a marrow-stem vine, and putting a small pinch of tobacco in the one end he proceeded to light the other, and apparently enjoyed the smoke in his improvised pipe.

The widow told us that one of her brothers was killed some 628
years ago by a member of the Sha-ma clan. Ever since the Nhe family have been waiting to catch the slayer and make him pay the penalty of his deed. The law of revenge rules

628 through all the clans and is very rigorously carried out. The widow told us that although her brother had been dead for years, if any member of her clan met the man who killed him he would at once attack him and attempt to wipe out the stain of the blood that had been spilt by spilling more. A few years afterwards there was a combined terrible attack on the Sha-ma clan, when horrible revenge was taken. That story, however, comes later on.

522 While I was sitting by the fire writing up my diary Mr Long was talking away at a rapid rate, telling them all the wonders of the Nosuland beyond the sea. The widow was a good listener. I told Mr Long I was like a deaf man, watching their mouths going but unable to understand anything they were saying. Every now and again there was a very hearty laugh all round, and I joined in, though I had not the least idea where lay the point of the joke. If I could not join in the conversation I could closely watch the faces and dress of those around
[303] us. I found out that single girls have only one plait of hair, while married ones have two. There was a great laugh when this information was given me. I can imagine how shocked Chinese women would be if conversation had gone on in their presence on such matters. These Nosu women entered into all the jokes as English women would have, and it was a treat to see how jolly they were.

123 I asked my guide to explain to the people that no one had ever before had such a chance of being in their homes as I, and that such a chance had only come once in my lifetime, and so I wanted to make the most of it. I told them that many Westerners would want to know all about the brave hill Nosu, and that if I could not give them the required information they would laugh at me. There was, however, no need for

123 apologies, for they were very willing indeed to tell me everything I wanted to know.

The retainers who had come with us were lodged in another 562 house, belonging to one of the slaves of Ah-pooh. I went down and sat with the folk there for a while. The wife in the little home was very friendly, asking me a lot of questions. Her daughter sat by her side nursing a six-month-old baby. They were all very free with us. The Chinaman who came spying was in the house also, and did not get on very well with the wife of the slave. She had asked him to give her a couple of feet of hair cord from the stock which he carried with him and he had refused. Later on he went to help himself to a drink of water from the tub which the woman had carried in. She immediately stopped him, telling him that he was strong enough to go and carry his own water. Evidently it was no hair cord, no free drinks. The man could hardly believe that the woman meant what she said, and tried again. The woman, however, stood up vigorously to him, and whenever he tried to get the drink of water she pushed him away. It was a revelation to the Chinese, coming as he did from a land where woman has ever been given a low place, and where the proverb compares the wife to a tub of water in which the husband can wash his feet and when he has finished throw it away.

At three o'clock in the afternoon we had breakfast. This 264 time it was not a goat but a fine pig that had been slaughtered, 262 with much squealing and yelling, about twelve o'clock. There were the usual trenchers on the floor, also two spoons and three wooden basins. One basin contained ten pounds of pork, another the gravy, and the third four buckwheat cakes weighing about half-a-pound each. We did full justice

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

264 to the meal, and begged that it might do as supper as well.
262 We suggested that it would last even as to-morrow's breakfast.

753 We had some difficulty in getting the people to face the camera. Several photos we took by stratagem. Possibly the Chinese spy had been telling them that I was going to take their spirits away with me in the camera, and the majority of them were too nervous to face the ordeal. When, however, later on I showed them in the magic-lantern the photos of my own boys they came to the conclusion that if there were any wicked magic in photography I would never have practised it on my own sons.

000 The fun with the moving figures was faster and more furious than ever. The laughter we managed to get during the time we were in Nosuland would take a lot of beating. So friendly did the people become that they begged me to send for my wife and children and settle down among them. This was before they went one further in these matters. I had the immense advantage of the presence of Mr Long, who spoke their language as they did, and was one of their own race, though he lived in China proper. Had I not had this great help I might have fared as badly as the second Englishman who got into the heart of Nosuland. The part reached by this unfortunate traveller was in the north, some distance from the farmstead at See-tieh, and many of my aboriginal friends deeply regret that in a quarrel that should never have happened he lost his life. The northern men persist in saying that the trouble would never have taken place had the two sides been able to understand each other's words. Unless a man is prepared to show infinite patience and resource, he should never venture among people whose words

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he is entirely ignorant of. A difficulty arises which a few words and a laugh could put straight at once, but there is no one to speak those words, and by-and-by there is a tragedy which means the loss of valuable lives, and difficulties which years of waiting do not solve. The first man with a bicycle to travel through West China was a German-American. He came at the time when anti-foreign riots were rather popular in some parts of China. He was alone, and knew nothing of the language, yet he managed to pass right through the country, causing immense excitement wherever he went, but receiving no harm and doing no harm. When he was in a tight corner and the mob looked ugly he used to take out his mouth-organ and play. This simple playing to the crowd opened his way on almost every occasion. The mouth-organ, persistent smiles and great patience brought him safely through dangers that with some men would have led to serious riots.

The presence of Mr Long and the daily round of smiles and good humour saved me from ever getting into any really serious situation among the so-called wildmen. If care be taken and proper interpreters, who are Nosu and not Chinese, be procured, it is not likely that any future traveller will meet with such a terrible and deeply regretted end as that met with by the gallant, adventurous Lieutenant Brooke.

CHAPTER XII

FIRESIDE YARNS

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IN my dining-room I have a couple of Chinese vases, and sometimes they are filled with magnificent bunches of magnolias, plucked from a tree growing on a hill opposite my front door. You cannot look at those bunches of sweet-smelling white magnolias without feeling glad. At another time, when the snow is on the ground, the same vases are filled with wild pink camellias, and if the flowers are only half opened, and there are green leaves here and there among them, you think you have never seen a finer bunch of flowers in all your life. On yet another occasion in the same vases are sweet-peas and cornflowers, wild roses and blue gentians and several other hill-flowers all mixed up together, yet blending in that perfect harmony which flowers never seem to break. One wonders which is the better, the bunch of the one kind of flowers only or the bunch of the many kinds all blended together.

I have been wondering as I have been reading over all the notes I took while travelling in Nosuland which is the better way to present them to the reader, whether to pick out all the information and stories relating to one subject and group them together like a bunch of pink camellias or white magnolias, or whether to let the stories come as they will, like the wild flowers as they are plucked from the hedges or hill-sides. Perhaps it is better to take them as they come to one, and possibly the reader may thus more easily share the 000 pleasure that came to me during the days when I was a guest among the people of unknown China.

Sitting around the fireside, we drifted into talking about 764 the customs of the Nosu at death. Cremation is the universal rule among these hillmen, and it used to be the rule among the Nosu in Chinese territory proper. When Chinese rule became consolidated in the southern parts some old-world, fussy mandarins resolved to stop this simple, natural method of dealing with the dead and to compel all the aboriginals to copy the Chinese method of burial, with all its revolting unsanitariness and almost nameless horrors. Had it been the other way about, and had cremation been adopted by the Chinese, it would have been a great gain in many ways. The cities of the dead in China occupy far more land than the cities of the living, and the amount of money spent on the dead is almost incredible. What can be more horrible and offensive than to walk into the front room of some Chinese friend's house and to be offered a seat near an awkward-looking mound right in the centre of the room. As the cup of tea is handed to you and you are sipping it and inquiring after the welfare of the members of the household, you are conscious of a disagreeable smell which tends to get on one's nerves and make one feel ill. And when you find it comes from the mound in the centre of the room, and that under this, resting on the floor, is the coffin and corpse of the father who died six months ago and has never yet been carried out for burial, you feel very queer. Fancy keeping the corpse of one's father or husband in the sitting-room for twelve months or more!

The way of the hill tribes is better. They believe in the

764 bright blaze of the fire and the cheerful breath of the winds for all those whose time has come and who have gone forth to solve the great secret of the other world which has been so carefully guarded, in spite of all attempts to solve it on the part of philosophers and wizards, saints and mediums, of many countries and many centuries. There has only been one solution of that great secret, and that the one given by the Great Master, who went down and came back again.

When a parent dies in a Nosu family there are greater ceremonies than on any other occasion. The rejoicings at marriage are quite quiet compared with the fuss made when a father or a mother goes on the long, unknown journey. Relatives from all parts arrive, and the crying for the dead is simply marvellous. Westerners are apt to misunderstand the mourning and crying aloud that Orientals indulge in at these stated times of grief. Because the wailing is done at the proper time, whatever may be the state of the feelings, we are apt to assign an air of unreality to the whole. In truth it is nothing of the kind. We sing at stated times in the services of the cathedral, and in the still more real services of the whitewashed wayside Methodist chapel, and no one thinks that the worshippers are wrong because the song bursts out at stated times. The Oriental has organised his expressions of grief as we have organised our expressions of joy and worship.

At these ceremonies of the Nosu for the dead the ubiquitous wizards come and go through their chanting and masses. After a few days of chanting and lamentation and feasting, the body is carried out to the hill-side and placed on the top of a large pile of wood. The dead person always wears his

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

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clothes, and sometimes is in a coffin as well. An offering of wine is poured out and then the light is put to the funeral pyre. If the body burns readily this is taken as evidence that the deceased was a good man. If there is difficulty in getting the corpse to burn, this is ascribed to the bad life led by the dead man. I was told that the heart and the buttocks are the most difficult parts of a corpse to burn. When there is nothing left but a few ashes these are usually put into a bag, and this again into a small box, which is buried in the family grave hill. There are no signs, such as are so common in China proper, to indicate which hills are the abode of the dead. There are no tombstones, no elaborate carvings, just the last passage through the purifying fire blown by the friendly wind and then the long, harmless sleep in the bosom of Mother Earth. How much cleaner and better and less harmful than the mass of graves which surround Chinese towns! Outside the city of Chaotung the coffins in the graves are often of the flimsiest nature, and frequently before one night has passed wolves or dogs have broken open the grave and coffin and devoured part or whole of the body. Such sights as this are frequently met with, and rifled graves and torn grave clothes can be seen on almost any occasion. Such a sight one never sees in Nosuland, and one readily and heartily thanks God that one cannot see it. Children are cremated in the same way as the parents. Here again the Nosu can teach the Chinese a lesson. It is not usual with the latter to bury children in the ancestral grave grounds. Having died young, they are supposed to have become unlucky spirits, and as such must at all costs be kept out of the graveyard where the venerable ancestors dwell. One must hold Confucianism responsible for this unnatural

764 treatment of the little ones who "go home" too early Such a fatal flaw as this in the great system of philosophy associated with the name of China's greatest sage will always prevent it from becoming the base of a great world religion. What children have suffered through parents holding false ideas of philosophy is simply appalling. One scarcely dares to tell all the things one has found out about child life and its sufferings in China. One has such a profound respect and even liking for the Chinese, and a great belief in their future, that one does not like to dwell too much on this, one of the blots on the character of a great people.

Sometimes the hillmen cross the Yangtse to visit friends or relatives in Yunnan and are taken ill in Chinese territory. In such a case they are terribly afraid lest they should die and be buried like the Chinese. The idea of a cold burial, without the warm, comforting blaze of the cremation fire, strikes terror into these Nosu, and they long to die at home, where wood is plentiful and a great fire is readily kindled.

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726 While we were staying at Ah-Pooh's a number of people from the district around came to visit us. Among these visitors was a regular dandy, dressed in huge parti-coloured trousers. The tops of these garments were blue and the bottoms red. The wearer was a striking feature in the crowd. We found out before long that he could do other things than merely strut about in his gay trousers. He and a friend gave me a display of spear-fighting. The spears the two men used were nine yards long. There are some twelve yards long and some even longer. The two men seized the spears and then ran up and down a field as if they

were meeting an enemy. All the time they were shouting 713
their war shouts. They attacked an imaginary enemy by 292
thrusting their spears forward and then jumped sideways or 726
into the air as if to avoid counter-thrusts. The best weapon to parry the long spear is the funny-looking trident, which always reminds one of Neptune and the sea. One is rather startled to see that Mars has stolen Neptune's weapon. If the man with the trident can beat down the spear and run past its point he has a great advantage over his opponent with the long, unwieldy weapon. Then the dandy and his companion attacked each other, and the man with the coloured trousers was decidedly the more agile and smart. The way he jumped about, avoiding each attack, was really clever. These young men always go barefoot, and get used to any kind of road. They can get across rough country barefoot as easily as the sandalled Chinese can go over well-trodden roads.

After the spear display they gave us an example of stone- 713
throwing. Before firearms penetrated into these hills stone- 726
throwing was a regular part of their warfare. The Chinese tell many stories of the way the Nosu, getting command of a higher position, have beaten off a band of attacking Chinese merely by throwing stones. The dandy's opponent went up hill and then began pelting him with clods of earth in the same manner as he would have done with stones if the fight had been a real one. All these missiles the dandy turned aside with his arm-protector or just dodged. All the young men wear over the left forearm a protector made of ox-hide covered with jet-black Chinese lacquer. The hide is so strong that with it they can easily parry the cut of a sword or beat off a stone thrown at them. As I watched the men knocking

713 aside the missiles it struck me that I could do that. I asked
726 them to try me. Being their guest, they were loath to do so, but at last were persuaded. As the clods came to me, instead of knocking them aside I treated them as if one were fielding a cricket ball, and returned them home as quickly as one could. I fancy one of our smart wicket-keepers with a good pair of gloves on would have given these people a surprise. As it was they thought the catching of the missiles was wonderful, and stories went about that nine men at once throwing at the foreigner were unable to hit him. I am glad they never put their belief to the test.

526 While we were watching the fighters several horses were
496 brought for sale. One of the friends of Mr Long wished to buy a few horses, and we had a good bit of excitement as these horses were being tried. Just below the farmhouse of Seetieh there was a kind of race-course, oval in shape, where the young men constantly gallop their horses. These men are the most expert riders I have ever seen in China. Often they ride bareback at a tremendous pace, and often on a very hard black hide saddle. I was very much interested in the stirrup, which was a heavy wooden kind of shoe polished black. It looked almost as big and clumsy as a cowboy's stirrup. Here again I noticed that the Nosu do not follow the Chinese ways, but have a way of their own. They always ride toes in the stirrup, like Westerners, and not heels in, as do most Chinese. There is something to be said in favour of the Chinese method. The roads in West China are so rough, and there is constant danger of the horse slipping, so that heels in has some advantage over toes in. If the horse falls the rider can jump clear, and so save an awkward accident. I always rode toes in until one day my mule went down

and I was caught with foot in stirrup unable to extricate 526
myself. After that escape I learned the Chinese style, 496
and now on the rare occasions when my horse slips I can usually clear myself easily. I have seen one or two nasty accidents which might have been avoided if the riders had followed the Chinese method. Of course when it comes to racing the heels are no match for the toes, although on a decent stretch of road, even with heels in, on a good pony one can ride at a very fast pace.

The finest Nosu rider I ever saw was a lame man, 231
who got about with the help of a long stick. On his legs he was very slow and clumsy, but put him on a horse which had any mettle in it and the lame man was transformed. When urging the horse to its fastest he would stretch his legs up almost level with the horse's neck and lean backwards as far as possible, and then away like the lightning. He would ride the wildest horse in this way, and could break in the roughest of Nosu or Chinese bronchos.

The prices asked for the horses brought for our inspection were very reasonable. Ten ounces of silver, worth then about thirty shillings, was the price of the best pony brought there. I got hold of a black-and-white one which rendered me magnificent service for some years. It would take me up and down the hills in my district without ever a mishap. When starting off on a journey which he had been before, I could throw the reins over his neck, take out my book or newspaper and read for hours together. One had just now and again to look at the road and to give an occasional word to the pony. He would face anything I put him to, and had not the

23/ slightest trace of viciousness. When at last he died I felt that I had lost a friend, and to this day many people talk about "Black and White" which their teacher rode for years.

There is in Nosuland a race of diminutive ponies standing about as high as a table and very much smaller than a donkey. They brought one of these to us and asked five ounces of silver for it. I have never seen such diminutive ponies in any other part of China. They seem quite peculiar to Nosuland. One of the missionaries in Chaotung purchased one of the little ponies for his children to ride. It was not much larger than a big goat.

The day they brought the horses and ponies to us for sale they told me the story of a flying pony owned in the days of long ago by a certain Va-sa-neh. This pony could travel in the air and on the clouds, going at a tremendous speed. The rider could reach Peking in a couple of hours, and after spending a few hours there transacting business, he would return home with equal speed. Our modern air-ships have to take a second place for speed compared with the wonderful flying horse ridden by Va-sa-neh. One New Year's Day Va-saneh's son-in-law, Oo-meng, came to see him, and received the flying horse as a present. Taking it back home with him, his officers were very anxious to see what the horse was like. One of these remarked that the horse was far too shaggy, and would look much better if its mane were cut. This advice was forthwith followed, and as in the case of the Old Testament hero, Samson, with the cutting of the locks the wonderful powers departed. With the loss of its powers no one any more prized the poor horse. It wandered away in the direction of its old home, and one day the son of the old

master saw it as it stood on the other side of a steep ravine. 231
Rushing indoors, he told his mother that the flying horse had returned, for which statement he was ridiculed. The mother, however, came out to see the horse on the other side of the ravine. The boy called and whistled to the horse as he had done in the old days. The horse immediately grew restless, and answered the call. Instead of going round and leading the horse home a safe way the boy continued to whistle and call. The horse remembered its old powers, and tried to fly across the ravine. It failed to do so and, falling to the bottom, was dashed to pieces.

Every year the Nosu north of the Yangtse are supposed to 648
send forty-eight horses as tribute to Peking, sending them via 231
Chentu, the provincial capital of Szechuan. How many of these actually reach Chentu, and whether any ever reach
Peking, I do not know. They also told me that from Tibet 006
there was forwarded every year, as tribute, three bushels and three gallons of small gold. Of late years more Chinese money has found its way to Tibet than Tibetan money to China. One story was that this gold was got from a cave, the cave every year producing just enough to pay the tribute. Another story was that the Tibetans went by boat to a cliff of solid gold and knocked off enough to pay the amount due. If their luck was good they knocked off a piece just sufficient. If their luck was bad a huge boulder of gold rolled off, smashing the boat and drowning all hands. What a magnificent burial! Yet I know many who would rather be alive in a mud hut than dead under a mountain of gold. Over and over again I have heard the Chinese talk of an Eldorado existing in Nosuland. They call this mythical place the Wan Tan Ping—the ten-thousand-piculs plain—meaning,

000I suppose, a plain large enough to grow ten thousand piculs of rice. They have also a saying:

If you only open up Wan Tan Ping,
The whole world will no more see hungry men.

This Eldorado is reputed to be fabulously rich in gold and precious stones. I inquired about it again and again, but no one knew where it was. If it does exist the people who know of its existence will be wise to keep the knowledge secret. The world does not want any more discoveries of large deposits of gold, cheapening the price of that metal and sending up the prices of nearly everything else. I have known and been shown places where aborigines have professed to have discovered silver but have hidden the knowledge from the Chinese lest their neighbourhood should be flooded with an influx of miners and all the discomfort that such a rush means to peaceful families living by.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

WE noticed while in Nosuland that every household 564
with which we stayed possessed slaves or retainers. 567
On inquiry we found out that this unknown part of China possesses the feudal system in its entirety. At the head are the Earth Eyes, or Earth Controllers, corresponding to the Chief Barons in the European Feudal System. Next to these come the Black Nosu, often erroneously called the Black Bones. It would be more correct to call them Black Bloods. Lower than these are the White Nosu, also erroneously named White Bones. Then follow on the slaves, who are usually, but not always, white Nosu who have not gained their freedom.

In the matter of intermarriage among these three classes the caste system is very rigidly preserved, intermarriage being practically unknown, and any approach to it being severely frowned upon. I had a letter a few years ago from an Earth Eye, asking if I could help him in a difficulty. He had married a wife or two, and had had no children. On the death of his proper wives he became very fond of a slave girl, and took her to live with him. When, later on, a son was born, he wanted to make the slave girl his proper wife. Then there was a storm among the relatives. He might keep up an irregular union as long as he liked, but such a thing as a legitimate marriage with this low-caste woman, which would have made the offspring heirs to the estates, was not to be entertained for a

564 moment. The Earth Eye begged my assistance, thinking
567 that if he became a Christian he would be able to keep his slave wife as his real wife. If I would help him to do this, and also allow him to continue to worship the family gods, he was willing to join the Church. The letter was quite a piteous appeal. I went to see him later on, and saw the slave wife. But of course there was no joining the Church on the terms laid down. Not long after the relatives got hold of the slave, beat her cruelly, and then flung her into a deep pit, where the wounded girl died an awful death. The Earth Eye was nearly frantic, and searched all about for her, but he did not discover her until too late. He nearly broke his heart over the loss of the girl, for whom he had a strong love.

564 The majority of the land on which the Nosu live, whether
648 in independent Nosuland or in the provinces of Yunnan and
425 Kweichow, is in the hands of the Earth Eyes. Where they have properly submitted to the Chinese Government, these Earth Eyes pay the usual land tax to the local mandarins. The paying of this land tax has been a boon to many of these Earth Eyes. When the Chinese Government first appointed officials over the districts where the Nosu owned the land there was the difficulty of the language. Many of the Black Bloods knew nothing of Chinese, and were very nervous about meeting the officials on the occasion of tax-paying. Some of the Earth Eyes set to work to study Chinese and became quite familiar with the ways of the officials' yamens. When they had reached this point they generously offered the Black Bloods their assistance. The latter were only too thankful to agree. The Earth Eyes then paid the taxes for the others, and as an acknowledgment of this kindness a gift of a goat or a sheep was made at the time of the tax-paying.

Later on the officials demanded the registration of all the 564
land, and the Earth Eyes not only registered their own lands 648
in their own names, but registered the lands of the confiding 425
Black Bloods as well, also in their own names. Before long they claimed these lands as their own, and an appeal to the official registers confirmed their claims. In this way the Black Bloods were done out of a lot of their land, and have had no redress. Sometimes the Earth Eyes have been weak men, and then the Black Bloods have tried to wrest back their lands, and here and there they have succeeded in doing so.

As a rule the Earth Eyes retain a part of the land for their 564
own immediate use. Of the rest a part is rented out to 427
tenants, who enjoy a fairly good fixity of tenure, and the rest is apportioned at a very nominal rental to the Black Bloods who, in addition to the various services they have to render to their overlords, pay a nominal rental, often in kind. The rent is just large enough to keep evident the overlord's title to the land. In some cases a horse and an ox have to be paid to the overlord by each generation, and a goat every three years.

The Black Bloods have to render fealty to the Earth Eyes, [576]
and when visiting them have to perform the kotow. The 564
Earth Eyes can demand their services at any time, and when 701
any fighting has to be done they must bring their men properly armed and provisioned, ready to defend their Earth Eye from attack, or to make attack on his behalf Now that the Chinese Government is being more firmly established over the lands where the Nosu own most of the soil, fighting is not so general as it used to be, but even now, in purely Chinese-governed territory a year never passes without some record of tribal fighting which engages a lot of men and leads

564 sometimes to loss of life. The Black Bloods in return for
701 their lands must put their lives and services at the disposal
of the overlords, who sometimes rule them with a rod of iron.
I know one Black Blood who dare not ride a horse in the
district where he lives because the overlord has forbidden
that privilege to Nosu of the second rank. When talking
to me about the affairs in his neighbourhood the Black Blood
saved his face by ascribing his not riding a horse to some other
[231] reason, but I found out the true reason why he always walked.
I know it was a real deprivation, because to a Nosu a horse
is almost as necessary as to an Arab of the desert.

[567] Nearly all the Earth Eyes and Black Bloods keep a number
564 of White Blood retainers, some of whom are slaves, with their
631 property, persons and family at the absolute disposal of
their masters. These retainers again have portions of land
assigned to them, and pay for this land in personal service.
They also have to hold themselves in readiness to respond to
their lord's call, and to fight for him and even lay down their
567 lives if so commanded. I visited some of the slaves' homes,
726 and saw, hung on the wall of each house, weapons and a bag
202 of oatmeal. In the bag are also a thin copper basin and a
spoon. The weapons must always be in readiness and the
bag full. Whenever there is trouble or the overlord needs
help in fighting the ram's horn is blown from the lord's
castle or residence, and as soon as the warning sound is heard
the retainer seizes his bag of oatmeal, ties it over his shoulder,
takes his weapons in his hands and hastens to the sound of
the ram's horn. It is astonishing how far the sound of these
horns carry. In some places the aborigines who have become
Christians call their companions to worship by the blowing
of one of these horns. The hole is not at the end of the horn,

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

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but at the side. Some of the boys who blow these horns can make the sound travel a long distance. 726 202

In a very short time after the blowing of the horn at the lord's residence there is gathered together a band of men all armed and provisioned for four or five days. As most of the fighting takes place near home, or at most but two or three days' journey away, the bag of oatmeal is quite sufficient for a sudden raid or for defenec against such a raid.

In addition to military service, the retainers have to help farm the overlord's personal land, ploughing, sowing, hoeing, reaping and harvesting. They also have to provide so much firewood each year, also so many pigs, sheep and fowls for the lord's table. If the latter is a man who has many guests, then the demands for his table are many and a constant strain on his retainers. Besides the retainers who live on the land there are a certain number who are household servants or slaves, and these have to be near the lord and lady on all occasions. If their master is kind and generous, then their lot is fairly comfortable, and many of them would not have their freedom if it meant their leaving. I have known some of them refuse to be wholly free because in that case they would be liable to attack at any time with no one to defend them. The lord is supposed to take up the quarrels of his men and to fight for them if he considers their cause is just. They can appeal to him at any time, and so a quarrel between the slaves of two Earth Eyes often leads to a big quarrel between the overlords. 567

Sometimes the lords will compound the duties of their retainers and slaves for a sum of money. So much will purchase their freedom from the duty of farming their lord's land, so much for supplying his fuel or his table, but I have never

567 heard that any sum of money will compound for military service. Of course if the slaves purchase their entire freedom and leave the clan the lord has no claim whatever on their services. Not many prefer to do this; they all like to have some claim on the central authority.

When the slaves are old enough to marry they are mated by their lords or mistresses. In many cases attention is paid to preference shown by the interested parties. The offspring of such marriages become the slaves of the overlord
583 and are at his disposal. I do not find that slaves are often sold out of the clan, but in the case of the marriage of the daughter of an Earth Eye or a Black Blood several slaves are sent with her as part of her dowry. In accordance with a similar custom Leah and Rachel took their slaves with them into Jacob's family. These dowry slave girls are married later on in the clan which the daughter enters. Sometimes these waiting-maids serve tyrants of mistresses. One such maid came to me one day, carrying her child, an infant in arms. She had said something in the hearing of another servant which was not very complimentary to the beauty of her mistress. Gossip and intrigue for favour exist in these Nosu households as well as in other households nearer the West, and so the mistress got to hear of the uncomplimentary remark of her maid. The mistress got into a fury, sent for the offender, and with a red-hot iron seared her face so as to spoil her beauty for ever. In her fit of passion she burnt the face of the little child as well. This was but mild compared to some of the punishments the lords and their ladies inflict on the slaves who offend them. I have heard of some cases details of which one cannot print in any book published in Christendom.

Now and again slaves run away, and then there is raised

the hue and cry. There is a saying that a master will seek 567
his runaway slave even if he has to go through all the nine districts of the Empire. I know one Earth Eye whose slave ran away, leaving his wife, whom he was fond of, behind. The master knew how the runaway liked his wife, and reckoned on his returning to get her away also. So he said nothing, but waited. True to these calculations, the slave returned home one night. Some traitor gave the alarm, and the runaway was captured. The next morning the Earth Eye led the slave outside of the castle to a grassy mound near by. Here the lord compelled the offender to kneel down, and with his own long sword cut his head off. This was a warning to his other slaves. There was no redress in this case, nor in any similar case. It is interesting to note that some time after another slave of this same overlord won the affections of his master's young daughter and eloped with her. The girl was recaptured but the slave escaped.

Over and above all the services rendered by the retainers 565
which have been mentioned, the vassals have to make money 631
payments on certain occasions which are specified, and on 423
as many other occasions as the overlord is powerful enough to enforce. Such occasions are the marriages, deaths and burials of any members of the lord's family. The levies put on the retainers and slaves at such times are not heavy, but the fact of their having no fixed rate makes the impost a source of constant friction.

When one lord dies, and the heir succeeds to the estates, there is usually trouble all round. The trouble is caused by the custom of what is termed "changing tenancies." Every tenant or vassal has to renew his tenancy of land from the new lord. This is often made the excuse for raising of rents

565 or for a demand of silver. So lucrative is such an opportunity
631 that even before the lord is dead a "changing of tenancies"
423 takes place. Sometimes, however, the tenants are obstinate
and the lord is weak, and then he finds it very difficult to levy his imposts. Occasionally the tenants will refuse all payments, and if they are powerful enough to continue in this passive-resistance policy, in time the land becomes recognised as their own. Several feudal estates have been broken up in this way until such time as one of the tenants or vassals gets strong enough to usurp the position of overlord and to compel his equals to render homage to him. In this way another Earth Eye is evolved and the old story works its way over again.

I remember a case in which the tenants ransomed their overlord from prison. One of the Earth Eyes south of the Yangtse got into trouble with the Chinese Government, and was captured and imprisoned. An almost impossible ransom was demanded by the officials. An attempt was made by the Earth Eye's family to get the tenants on the estate to gather the ransom money. One village went hunting musk deer and were very fortunate in their efforts. They managed to get twenty pounds' weight of musk and with this satisfied the demands of the rapacious officials. In return for this gift on the part of the villages, the Earth Eye gave them the right over a large portion of his lands and wrote an agreement to that effect. The agreement I have seen, but it was only kept as long as it suited the family of the overlord. The value of the musk would be about ten thousand ounces of silver. A magnificent ransom indeed!

631 One can easily see by the several incidents related that
421 the feudal system among the Nosu north and south of the
Yangtse is similar to that which existed in Europe during

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

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THE MOUNTAIN CASTLE OF EARTH EYE LO

[Plate facing p. 144]

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lo1o AE4

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the Middle Ages. There is, however, one particular in which the system is not complete. The king holds no position in this system. Above the overlords the system changes into the ordinary Chinese mandarin rule. The peculiarity of the system as it exists south of the Yangste is that it exists side by side with the ordinary Chinese land system, which consists in nominal land nationalisation, with land taxes paid as the chief tax of the country. Private ownership exists within this national ownership, and is as certain as private ownership in England or America, except that when land is needed for public works it is taken without hesitation at a nominal compensation. If such were the state of the land question in England, how cheaply our railways and public works could have been built. Unfortunately our English Earth Eyes have long ago taken their toll of all these works and by-and-by the country will have to pay heavily for the fact that in land matters England has not been so wise as China.

In the district south of the Yangtse the feudal system is doomed to fall before long. It will probably exist in independent Nosuland for many decades and possibly generations. One force helping to bring the system to an end in the southern district is the irresponsible character of many of the feudal lords, the Earth Eyes. Were the true story of these written, just as it could be written, concerning the last fifty years only it would make lively reading, and if it were thoroughly understood by the thinking Chinese they would demand an immediate end of this anomalous system and an introduction of the ordinary land system of the whole country, which can hardly be improved on except at the expense of some such terrible revolution as changed once for all the oppressive land system of France.

CHAPTER XIV

STORIES ABOUT EARTH EYES

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HERE are some of the stories I have picked up about the Nosu Earth Eyes during the few years I have come in contact with them. Just before Dr Sun Yat-sen brought about his great revolution in China in the year 1911, when the Manchu dynasty had come to its last days, one of the Earth Eyes in Nosuland was engaged in a long struggle with some other aborigines over the eternal, never-ending land question. His lands bordered on the district governed by the Chinese officials of Ning-yuan Fu, and by-and-by these officials came out and took part in the inter-tribal struggle. They took the side against the Earth Eye who is named Lo-chee. When Chinese officials enter into a struggle of this kind there is bound to be treacherous developments. All is fair in love and war. The official at any rate believes that all means are lawful if they ensure the capture of the enemy. It is only as China comes into the light of Western civilisation that she obeys the rules of the game, and then only when she is struggling with other Powers. In settling her own internal difficulties she still adopts any methods which may appear advantageous to her and respects no promises made to her enemies. Before long Lo-chee was trapped and carried off by the soldiers to the city of Ning-yuan. Here he was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment, which in a Chinese prison, as they then existed, practically meant a life sentence. When this news got abroad

in the districts south of the Yangtse many persons gave a great 648
sigh of relief. This Earth Eye has been one of the most cruel 622
men this class of landlords has ever produced, and his enemies
are very numerous. It was in his castle, south of the great 622
river, that I first saw him and discovered what kind of a man 797
he was. On his estates there are a large number of Christians,
who, when they first commenced to read the Book, wished to
erect a small chapel where they could gather together for
worship. Lo-chee, however, has bitterly opposed all efforts
in that direction, and has at times cruelly persecuted some
of those who have dared to accept the teachings of the
foreigner. Thinking that a long prison sentence might have
modified his opposition, I sent a letter to the prison in Ning-yuan,
asking him to permit his tenants to erect the building
they were desirous of seeing built. The reply came in due
time that if I would use my influence and get him out of prison
he would himself build a chapel and subscribe a thousand
ounces of silver to the work I was overseeing. Of course this
condition was an impossible one, even if I had desired to
fulfil it. It was the great-grandfather of this man who owed
his release from prison to the present of the twenty pounds
of musk which the fortunate village hunters had obtained.
And it was the descendants of these hunters who had turned
Christian and wished to erect their place of worship and study.
When these men first became converts their overlord, the
Earth Eye, adopted a very stern attitude, and threatened with
all kinds of penalties any of his tenants who should dare to
go against his wishes. I went across with some of my helpers 622
to visit him and to see if we could induce him to adopt a
different attitude to his people. I was a guest in his castle
for three days, and got to know a good bit about this

622 remarkable man. He treated me most hospitably, buts howed stern hostility to the work I was doing. I found him a man of thirty-three years of age, and a great drinker of spirits and smoker of opium. He had had four Nosu wives, who were all dead, and had married three others, who were still living. Among the many questions we discussed was the "woman" question. He saw me writing a letter to my wife which I wished to send back from his castle. He laughed at me for doing this and derided me as a man who was afraid of his wife. I smiled, and wondered what would have happened had he had a wife such as I had. A little later on he retrieved the situation. He had been reading a small medical book giving advice to mothers on the bringing up of little children. When he saw that the title-page bore the Chinese name of the woman he accused me of being afraid of, he remarked: "Well, if I had a wife who could write a book like that I also would respect her."

[595] When he described to me the stern way in which he ruled
622 his harem I suggested that some of the women might imitate
628 the Chinese women and seek refuge from their hard lot in suicide. He flared up at the suggestion, and said he would cut in pieces any wife of his that dared to attempt such tricks. He told me that he and his wives all slept in one room, where arms of several kinds are kept in readiness to deal with any sudden or treacherous attack. Having killed so many of his enemies in his many fights, he is always afraid of revenge, and so never quits his arms night or day. The bedroom is well loopholed, and there are guns kept constantly loaded. The wives have also been trained to load these weapons that they may be of assistance in time of need. From his windows this Earth Eye can overlook a lot of

country, and, at night, if in any quarter he heard an unusual 622 rustling he used promptly to fire in the direction whence the 628 sound came so as to be first with any possible enemies. When this little habit of his became known everybody gave the neighbourhood of his castle a wide berth, except in broad daylight. He has possibly most to fear from assassins within the home, who might be bought over to get rid of him. Just inside the bedroom door there is a deep pit covered over with a trap door which is shut firmly in the daytime. At night the pit is opened, and anyone who tried to get in by the door would probably find himself a prisoner in the pit at once, and at the mercy of one who shows none. Three men were hired by another Earth Eye to kill this Lo-chee. They managed to get right into the castle, but were caught before they had carried out their plans. The Earth Eye who had hired them had promised each of them two "tings" of silver if they succeeded in assassinating Lo-chee. The ting of silver weighs over ten ounces and is in shape like a half of an orange. Being examined by torture, the men confessed who had hired them and what had been the promised reward. The Earth Eye then said that they should not be cheated out of their two tings, for he would himself give them such. There and then he ordered his underlings to cut off the knee-caps from each of the captured men. This was done, and taking these up Lo-chee threw them into the laps of the gowns of the wounded men and told them to take their reward and go. The men died in agony. There was, of course, no appeal from the barbarism of this Earth Eye. Every care was taken to let this news be carried abroad, that other attempts at assassination might be discouraged. The men who were so cruelly treated were two Mohammedans. In his early days

622 628 Lo-chee had had a lot of quarrels with Mohammedans, and many of them are waiting for a favourable opportunity to get even with the man who has caused so many of them to suffer.

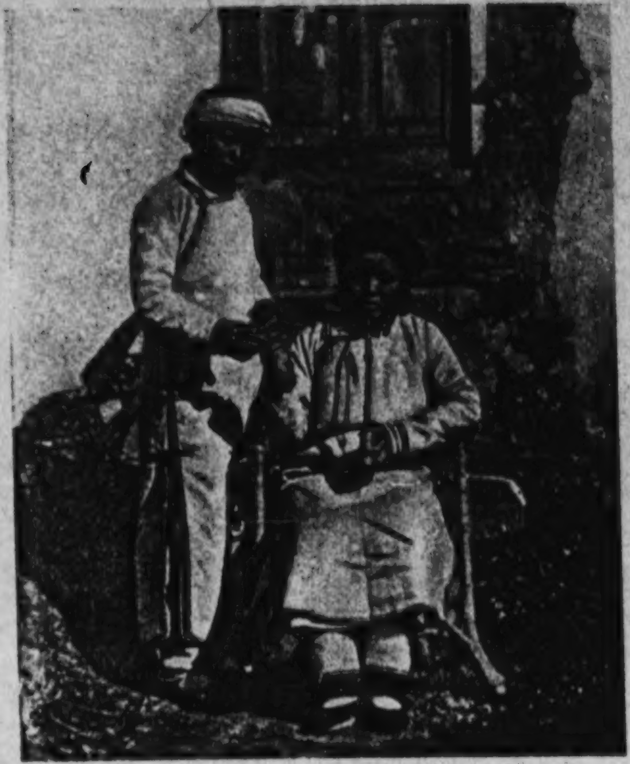
622 797 As long as I stayed in this Earth Eye's home I, of course, persisted in my attempts to persuade him to accept Christianity. He told me almost at once that he would rather lose his head than become a Christian. He said that if the then Emperor of China accepted Christianity, and issued a rescript ordering all his subjects to follow his example on pain of death, he would be one who would refuse to obey. "And if," said he, "the officials captured me and took me out to execution, I would curse your Jesus every step I took on my last march." I do not for the life of me know why the man was so bitter in his opposition. I do not know that he had ever come across Christians before. Very possibly he made up his mind on the strength of the many rumours which were so rife all over the Empire in the latter days of the Manchus. It makes one shudder to think of the terrible stories that were told everywhere of the foreigners and the religion they practised. If I had been a Chinaman and believed all these stories I should have been very bitter against every foreigner who landed in my country. The responsibility of fostering these cruel lies rested on the governing classes of China, who attempted to defeat all foreign influence by disseminating these stories, which spread like wildfire in those bad old days. Whatever was the cause, it was only too patent that Lo-chee was determined to block all Christian influences to the fullest extent of his power.

622 628 When this man was younger and, as an orphan, was in full control of all his estates, he made affairs as lively as possible for all neighbouring landlords. He led his bands right and

left, and wherever he found enemies he destroyed them. 622
It is estimated that he murdered at least two hundred people, 628
and in order to destroy all traces of his crimes he burnt the corpses of those whom he killed. No wonder that he dreads the working of the law of revenge, which is so powerful in all districts where Nosu dwell. One long struggle he had was with another Earth Eye by the name of An (Peace). There was a piece of land in dispute which both claimed, and they had several fights over the matter, in which retainers on both sides lost their lives. At last a Chinese mandarin, with the usual eye to the main chance, persuaded the two men to bring the case to his court, where he promised to decide it justly. The two Earth Eyes agreed. Knowing something about the ways of Chinese justice, Mr An paid in eight hundred ounces of silver to the official. Lo-chee was duly informed of this, and he offered the same. An then went up to a thousand, and was followed by the other. Then An increased his promise to twelve hundred, and the case was decided in his favour by this auctioneer of a mandarin. An, however, only paid down a thousand, and so the Chinese official left the case open for reconsideration. What he evidently expected happened, and Lo-chee promptly trumped the cards of his opponent by a still bigger bribe. He, of course, found that he had justice on his side, and the disputed land was awarded to him. Mr An, however, refused to take any notice of the decision, and the law took no steps to enforce its findings. Things, therefore, remained as they were, except that somebody's pocket was considerably heavier.

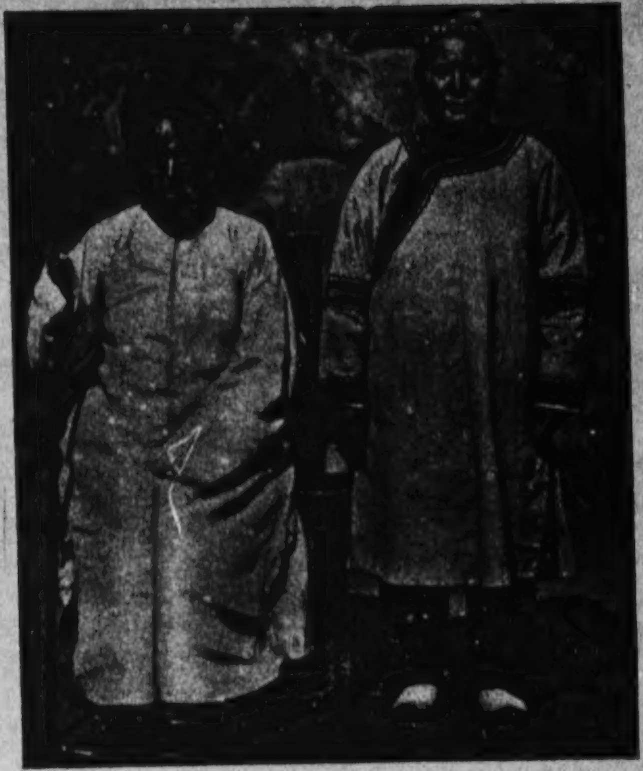
While this official was trying the case and emptying the 567
money bags of the two Earth Eyes, his son called on Lo-chee, and seeing that he had a large number of slave girls in

[Plate facing p. 152]



AN EARTH EYE WIDOW

Ruler of thousands of acres smoking her water-pipe.



A NOSU AND HIS DAUGHTER

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584 his establishment, he asked that one of them might be given to him. Lo-chee agreed to this request, and called all the girls of the establishment together. Then he told the mandarin's son to make his choice. Here, however, the girls struck. They were desperately annoyed and made a big row. They absolutely refused to go to the Chinaman at any price. Possibly they knew that they would have the secret sympathy of their master, however he might curse them for their obstinacy in the presence of the son of the official whose favour he wished to purchase. The feelings of the young fellow were appeased by sending to the city of Chaotung, where a Chinese girl was purchased and presented to him.

622 When the revolution broke out there was a general amnesty
628 proclaimed and many prisoners were released. Lo-chee thus found himself a free man again, and came back to his estates south of the Yangtse, where, after a while, he resumed his stern sway over the country-side as if he had never been away. The officials, however, in the district where he lives, have their eye on him, and seem determined to get him sooner or later and break his power. Up until now, however, he has defied all their efforts. During the stern anti-opium campaign, when great efforts were made to uproot all the poppy grown, a military official and a band of soldiers went around the different districts to see that the Government commands were properly obeyed. It was rumoured that this official had orders to capture Lo-chee. The Earth Eye, however, seems to have got hold of this information, and when the official and his soldiers entered the castle to discuss the carrying out of the anti-opium campaign they were startled to see over a hundred armed men all lined up to receive them. The soldiers wished to try conclusions, but

622 the officer wisely refrained. To him discretion was the better
648 part of valour. He left the Earth Eye for a more convenient season. Lo-chee is still in his castle, ruling his tenants with a rod of iron, training hundreds of men for the day when the Chinese soldiers shall make a real attempt to break once for all the power of this wild outlaw Earth Eye. When this effort is made in earnest it will surely succeed, as similar efforts have succeeded with some who were stronger even than Lo-chee.

622 The very reverse of this man is found in an Earth Eye who lives forty miles farther south. He, in common with many more of his class, has often shown a fierce, cruel disposition, but has failed to carry this out consistently. Consequently some of his retainers have broken right away from him, refusing not only the ordinary duties of the feudal system but also the slightest rent for their land. When I first went to visit this Mr Ah-yee I found his castle in a most dilapidated condition, and there was not a single decent room in the whole set of buildings. Like all other Nosu, he is very fond of horses. On one occasion I found in his stables a fiery horse that smoked tobacco and whinnied for it if he were deprived of it for any length of time. The Earth Eye would go down and stand near the manger, smoking a long pipe. The horse would stretch out its neck and sniff up the tobacco smoke with great avidity, showing extreme delight as he did so. Possibly owing to this habit, in which his master indulged him, the creature was quite thin.

584 Earth Eye Ah-yee has two boys and a girl, and as the girl grew there were suitors for her hand. One young Earth Eye was keen on finding out what kind of girl she was, and determined to visit her home in disguise. One day a band of wandering players and conjurers strolled into the courtyard

584 and offered to perform for the amusement of Ah-yee and his household. The whole establishment turned out into the yard, and among them the young girl. She entered as heartily into the fun as any of the others. After the players had gone away Ah-yee discovered that in the band was the young Earth Eye who wanted his daughter. The enterprising young fellow had bribed the strollers to let him be one of their band temporarily, and on their consenting had led them to his would-be father-in-law's home. He enjoyed the adventure very much, and saw all that he wished to see. The father of the girl was wild at what he termed the great insult, and said that if he had found it out in time he would have given the suitor a sound thrashing. I wonder whether the girl repented at not having dressed in her very best on the occasion of the clandestine visit of her lover. Later the enterprising young fellow came to a terrible end, and the girl he wanted was given as second wife to his uncle, a man old enough to be her father.

[463] 292 751 While I was staying with Ah-yee I noticed that he had a tailor at work making a number of garments. One of these garments was of red flannel and had a number of Nosu words worked on the front. Ah-yee told me that these were a charm which would protect the wearer of the garment whenever he was in a fight or in great trouble. He gave me one such garment later on. I have had no need to test the protective qualities of this magic garment, and am afraid the donor did not believe the yarn he told me about the wonderful red jacket.

791 842 These great Earth Eyes are frequently the prey of wizards and necromancers. Lo-chee, in spite of his seven wives, had no son. A necromancer was consulted and he gave it as his verdict that the castle was built in the wrong position, so interfering with the hidden influences of the soil. In

obedience to this verdict the stern Earth Eye who had so 791
defied all the teaching of the Christians pulled his castle right 842
down, and at great expense rebuilt it less than half-a-mile away. Since the necromancer's advice has been carried out there have been one or two births in the harem, which are always announced as sons. In some strange way these sons of Lo-chee, when they grow up, turn into daughters. Last year there was another bulletin announced, and it was to the effect that one of the Mrs Lo-chees had presented her husband with a son. It is too early yet to know whether the great change will take place with this one also. Let us hope, for the father's sake, that it will remain a son. Possibly if there were an heir to the estates the great Earth Eye would be more amenable to reason and the dictates of humanity.

A few years ago the principal building in another Earth 712
Eye's castle, where Lo-chee's daughter went as wife, formed a peculiar landmark in the district. The castle is built on the extreme point of a steep hill at the foot of which two rivers run to a junction. Except to modern guns, the castle is almost impregnable. In the days when it was built it was so. The main building was all awry. One end of it was nearly twice as wide as the other, and the appearance of the crooked roof, narrow on the north side and wide on the south, was most uncanny. In passing by one wondered what kind of a place there could be on the top of the steep cliff. Wizards had been at work again, and by their advice this bizarre building had been erected in this wild place so difficult of access. No luck has, however, come to the three brothers living there, for in spite of seven or eight wives between them, I have never heard of the birth of a son and heir to the great castle and immense estates.

CHAPTER XV

MORE ABOUT EARTH EYES

622 ANOTHER Nosu Earth Eye with whom I got very friendly was named An Yong-chi (Peace which glories). This was the one that had such a long struggle with Lo-chee, and carried the case to the auctioneer official. If one could only write fully the story of his house, there would be enough incident to fill several books. He claimed to be the descendant of the most important of the ancient Nosu, when these people were powerful throughout a great part of China. If there were to arise a Nosu king his family would claim the right to occupy the throne. As, however, a score or hundred of others would do likewise, there would not be a very peaceful reign for any of the
622 claimants. An's mother was stolen when a young girl by
583 his father, who was determined to have her for wife, in spite of all opposition on the part of the parents, who had decided to let their daughter go only to a suitor who would pay a great sum for her. The suitor sent his emissaries to bribe over some of the slaves in the girl's home, and through them found out when the powerful men of the household would be absent on some pressing business. Such a favourable opportunity coming around, An's father took a band of several hundred men and with these forced his way into the girl's father's castle and kidnapped the damsel he had set his heart on. She became his wife *de facto* if not *de jure*, and after all, among these lawless Nosu, it is that that counts.

When the father returned there was, of course, a great row, 622
and steps were taken to avenge the insult. But there were 583
found means to appease wrath, and by-and-by things settled down, and the lady became the mistress of the home of one of the most important Nosu chiefs. This kind of 583
kidnapping is very common and is copied even by the poor Chinese who have become tenants of the Nosu landlords. One day I met a band of men, with spears and swords, going down a hill which I was ascending. They did not look very warlike, and seemed more as if they were out for a big lark. Asking where they were going, they informed me that they were off to steal a wife. I did not feel tempted to join them, though I should like to have seen how they managed, and whether the reality was anything like we schoolboys had pictured when we were taught by sober British schoolmasters to sing:

Oh, who will o'er the downs so free,
Oh, who will with me ride,
Oh, who will up and follow me,
To win a blooming bride?

The reality did not q[illegible]k like our dreams of youth. The bride to be stolen [illegible] another landlord's estate. Though I resisted the te[illegible]on to carry out the buccaneer principles instilled so unthinkingly into me years ago, I was interested enough to follow the case up, and felt rather glad that they got the girl, and hope they lived together happily every afterwards. Some folk out here are all in favour of such marriages, as they do away with expensive ceremony and much trouble. Some of the girls are also in favour of it. It is fine to live in a state of romantic uncertainty, expecting a band of armed men and an eager

583 bridegroom to come along any day, bent on the capture of a bride, whose virtues and accomplishments have become known far away from home. Youth is the time of romance even on the hills of Western China, and the rich folk have by no means a monopoly of this romance.

622 As An Yong-Chi grew up he took to the study of Chinese, and later on, at a neighbouring town, entered the lists for the coveted degree of B.A., which carried great weight under the rule of the Manchus. He succeeded in the struggle, and was very proud of his literary accomplishments. On one occasion I presented him with a Bible. He returned it later on, saying that he could write a better book than that, and asking me to give him a modern pistol instead. This was rather a take-down for an enterprising missionary. These rebuffs, however, do not dishearten one, for one takes them all as part of the day's work and fun. And it is good to meet a man who has a great idea of his own attainments. After all, it is not so rare to find men who place higher value on weapons of war than on the Bible, and these do not all live outside of Europe and Christendom. Still, it was a bit startling to find a man whose name was "Peace which glories" so desirous to possess an up-to-date pistol.

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593 On my return from furlough in 1910, I was very sorry to hear that Mr An, the Earth Eye, was dead. His enormous estates were left to his two sons, who were both under twenty years of age. The story of this young Earth Eye, the second of the two brothers, is one of the most tragic stories I have ever heard, and I have heard a great many while living in West China. He it was who disguised himself as a strolling player, to get a good look at the pretty daughter of Ah-yee. As long as the father was alive the

boy kept himself within reasonable bounds, and no one ever 622 dreamed of the fate which awaited him, a fate comparable 593 to the first great tragedy which broke in on the happiness of man. After the father's death, the boy lost all control over himself, and gave himself up to unbridled dissipation. He came and lived not far from where I am writing this story, and soon had the whole country-side in a state of terror. Being one of the overlords of these immense estates, on which are more than a hundred villages and market-towns, he could do almost as he liked, and none dared to oppose. The stories of his sudden raids on the homes of the people, and the terrible orgies he gave himself up to, seem almost incredible, but they are vouched for as true. He tried to kidnap a young bride one day, and this led to a gathering of the clans, bent on murdering him, if he dared to appear. The folk were driven to desperation. Seeing the opposition he had provoked, he retired for a while. Then came rumours of great trouble between the two brothers. The elder brother had been lately married, and the younger brother got too free with the bride. A great quarrel ensued, and at last it seemed as if the young rake were plotting to kill his elder brother, in order to appropriate the bride to himself. The elder brother quickly made up his mind, and determined that if one had to die it should not be he. He then sent off and hired a noted Chinese boxer, who was willing to do any cruel deed for a consideration. The boxer was promised a large sum of money if he would assassinate the younger brother. He agreed to the terms, and one night, in the castle, the terrible deed was performed. The young fellow fought hard at first, and it looked as if he would succeed in getting away. But others came to the assistance of the boxer, and in spite

622 of all the beggings and entreaties of the young fellow, who
593 was but a big boy, he was killed right out. There was no one to stop Cain and his murderous tools. After the fell deed was completed, the boxer disappeared for a while, and the body was duly buried. But the story of Cain repeated itself. No peace came to the elder brother. I went to see him, and found him full of terror. Ghosts appeared in the castle every night. The spirit of the murdered man haunted the place. It seemed almost as if the brother who was living would go mad under the strain of terror. I never heard that he was sorry for his cruel action. It was sheer
622 terror of the spirit of the dead. Then some black wizard
593 came on the scene, and said that blood could only be atoned
782 for by blood, and that the dead man would never lie quiet in his grave until sacrifice had been made to him. This wizard's advice was followed, and steps were taken to perform the sacrifice. The boxer, Mr Peng, was sent for to receive the balance of the blood money, and he came quite unsuspectingly. He duly reached the castle where the fell deed had been committed, and was lodged in a temple outside the walls. He was well fed and hospitably entertained, with promise of payment on the morrow. Tired with his journey, he went to sleep, possibly thinking of the silver that was soon to be his. During the still hours of the night the servants of the Cain Earth Eye crept into the temple, and swiftly and suddenly bound the sleeping boxer. Had he been awake he undoubtedly would have made a big struggle for his life, and more blood might have been shed before superior numbers overpowered him. Bound like a pig, Mr Peng the great boxer was taken in the dead of night to the grave of the murdered Earth Eye. Here he was

offered up to the dead man. First of all he was stripped, and 622
gashes were cut in his back with a sword. Into these gashes 593
ceremonial candles were stuck, and these were lighted for 782
the dead. What must have been the feelings of the living sacrifice one cannot imagine. When the candles had burnt right out, the boxer was cut into six pieces and the severed corpse was thrown away for wolves or dogs to devour. The spirit of the boxer was in this way supposed to be sent into the underworld, to have it out with the spirit of the murdered Earth Eye. Funny place the Hades imagined by these people must be!

Nothing was ever done by the officials in connection with 628
these inhuman crimes. Relatives came down on the elder 622
brother, but their one idea was blackmail under threat of vengeance. These indignant relatives were all placated by gifts of land from the estates of the elder brother.

Peace has, however, not come to this modern Cain. He 622
wanders about from place to place, and has often come over to see me. Two years ago he spent Christmas with us, and helped to share our English Christmas dinner. There was another Earth Eye at the same table, and he also was a murderer—that is, has caused others to lose their lives in the manner so common among these landed gentry of China's Western Hills. The pair did not form a very inspiring company to share a good plum-pudding with. My wife, however, tried to make them comfortable, and though it was as if Pilate and Herod were gathered around the table of the Peasant of Galilee, we managed to forget most of the troubles of the past in the joys of the present.

This second Earth Eye was on one occasion captured by 622
the officials, and thrown into prison at Chaotung Fu. Not 648

622 long before this, still another Earth Eye had been captured
648 in the same way, in the same city, and had been summarily executed. No wonder that these landlords give the cities where the officials live a wide berth. They all know that there are crimes sufficient laid at their doors to warrant the execution of nearly every one of them. This second Earth Eye who had Christmas dinner with us, when he found himself in durance vile, determined to leave no stone unturned. He managed to bribe some of the people about him, and so got arrangements made for escape. Some of his retainers brought his swiftest horse one night, and waited outside the city wall. A confederate dug through the earth wall of the prison, and through this hole the prisoner escaped. A short, quiet run brought them to the city wall, down which there was no great difficulty in climbing. Jumping on the magnificent horse which knew him, and was waiting for him, the escaped landlord fled for his life. Had he been overtaken, he would in all probability have been executed the same day. It was indeed a very frightened man that fled through that night. His trusty horse served him well, as if he knew what depended on his efforts, and by morning, horse and rider were both over the borders, and in another province safe from the pursuit of the Chaotung officials. Very few Earth Eyes have had so near an escape as that. A poor horse might have been his undoing. We had a ride together once, the Nosu Earth Eye on his faithful horse, and I on my little black-and-white Nosu pony.

578 There is a sister also to the two brothers who quarrelled so tragically. She also has had her full share of trouble, and has been the heroine in more than one terrible incident. She was married into a family with the territorial name of

Shoh-ee. It cost her husband ten thousand ounces of silver 578 to win his bride. Not long after the marriage I rested one night in her husband's castle, and was hospitably treated.

The mother-in-law received us in the guest hall, and squatted on the floor, smoking her long pipe while we talked to her. She was nervous, as she had never had a foreigner in her house before. The young husband soon after marriage became very ill, and it was seen that he was in a rapid consumption. Being the only son, and just married, this threatened serious trouble on the estates, in case he died. Many cures were tried but none were successful, and the young consumptive Earth Eye soon left his bride a widow. In the absence of male issue, an uncle came forward and claimed the estates, and from this time forward there was persistent fighting and trouble. The uncle called on all the tenants, and demanded their allegiance, under threat of dire punishment if they refused. The widow and the dowager lady resisted these attempts for a long time, but evidently these women were not made of such stern stuff as the mother of Mr Long, who so successfully fought all the claimants to her lands. Some months after the death of the husband 578 a son was said to have been born, and of course that made a 695 change in the state of the struggle. The uncle and his party said that the baby was one purchased from a poor Chinese family, and they gave the name of the hamlet where this family lived. They refused, therefore, to recognise the new heir to the estates. Just at this point, the officials got hold of the case. They have a keen eye for a case that spells money for their pockets, while they leave severely alone most of the terrible tragedies that are such a disgrace to many of these country-sides. The disputants appeared, 578 therefore, in the Chinese law courts, to continue the struggle. 695 Everybody thought that the only way in which the widow could prove the child genuinely her own was by suckling it in open court. The mandarin adopted this test, but did it in such a way as to carry no conviction to some of the onlookers. They evidently forgot that some of these officials never want a *cause célèbre* like this settled off too quickly. The cow must be milked quite dry before it is sent back to its pastures. The mandarin stated in court that the child had actually taken the widow's milk, and therefore must be genuine. The opposing side said that it was the official who had done the drinking, by swallowing a large bribe, and that there was no trace of milk in the widow's breast. But the case was won *pro tem.* by the widow. She realised, however, that that was not the end of the matter, and that the struggle would be continued for a long time yet. She determined to look about for stronger protection than she 622 then possessed. Several days' journey away lived another Earth Eye, named Peh-eye. He was the strongest man in all his district, and ruled almost absolutely, keeping hundreds of armed retainers and slaves to enforce his bidding. Some middle person approached him, and told him about the widow who had such difficulty in keeping her husband's estates. Mr Peh-eye offered to marry the widow and defend her lands against all comers. The fact that he was very much married already made no difference to the arrangement. The chivalrous protector came, married the widow, and with his strong bands of armed men soon fought off all claimants to the estates. His ruthless way of dealing with enemies soon struck terror into the whole district. His men made his word law. Woe to anybody who disputed

his findings, or showed any independence when his men 622
were about. Two men incurred the enmity of some of his followers, and paid terribly for their temerity. The house in which these two men lived was surrounded at night, and at the first break of dawn Peh-eye's men burst in, captured the two offending men, and there and then killed them. They then added barbarism to lawlessness, by cutting out the hearts and tongues of the dead men. These they cooked at the fire, in the house where the murder was committed, and devoured. They knew that this story would go all about, and strike fear into all who were faint-hearted. For a while the widow who had married this terrible Earth Eye enjoyed rest from her enemies, and it seemed as if no one would further dispute her title to the estates, nor the genuineness of any offspring she might have. But as in the
case of many of these tyrants, Peh-eye went too far. At the 622
time of the Revolution in 1911 the new regime began to 648
inquire into the actions of this terrible man. He resented all attempts to reduce him to any kind of order, and defied the provisional government. He had managed to steer his way safely through all the rocks and shoals of official interference in the Manchu days, and thought that he would be able to do the same with the republicans. Here he made a profound mistake. An official and a few men made a visit to his own castle to talk over matters. Before long, high words were used and a quarrel broke out. Seeing that the official's retinue was but small, Peh-eye became very overbearing, and used threats. At last he ordered all his armed men to line up, and gave the command to put the official to death. At first this man hardly realised that the Earth Eye meant what he said, but as he began to realise that he

622 was in earnest, the official of the new republic adopted a 648 different tone, and begged for his life. After having done this in a most craven way, the great landlord relented, and let him leave in safety. Peh-eye was one of many who presumed that the new regime would only last a short time, and that the next set of rulers might be as easily dealt with as were the money-loving auctioneer officials of the Manchu dynasty. The Chinese official did not forget that he had kotowed to a Nosu Earth Eye, and determined to wipe out this disgrace. He swore to have revenge, and carried out his oath to the very end. He sent in such a report to headquarters that before long troops were dispatched to make an end of the rule of the Earth Eye, who had for so long reigned over his neighbourhood. Several fights took place near to Peh-eye's castle, and in these the troops did not always come off victorious. They stuck, however, to their task, inspired on by the official who was bent on wiping out insult. At last Peh-eye was driven to take refuge in a large cave, and here he offered a desperate resistance. All his efforts, however, were of no avail. He was not now up against a corrupt mandarin who preferred money to all else, and who was willing to let trouble remain, so as to be a source of more income later on. He was now dealing with men who were going to take everything, lands, money, life and all. It was extermination and not compromise that was to be the end of this struggle. All offers and entreaties were refused, and at last a shot rendered the terrible Earth Eye *hors de combat*. The cave was then rushed and the body of the great leader was decapitated. The head was exposed in the city where the insulted official lived, that everybody might know that he had wiped out fully the insult which

the Nosu had given to the Chinese Government officer. All 622
the lands of the great Earth Eye were confiscated and sold. 648
So were the lands of the daughter of "Peace which glories."
She had found no safe refuge after all in the powerful protection of the chief who had terrorised the whole neighbourhood. She now wanders around with her son, trying to make something turn up. The last I heard about her was that she was at Lo-chee's trying to get him to marry her in addition to his other wives, taking all her claims to the confiscated lands as her dowry. Should there be another change of government, there may be a sequel to the troubles of the young widow, whose life has been so full of fighting and tragedy.

An uncle of this young widow, also named An (Peace), was 583
one of those placated by a gift of territory on the murder of 622
his nephew by the Cain Earth Eye. He was justly indignant at this murder, but is quite willing himself to break laws when it is to his own advantage. He was married to the elder of two sisters, but he heard that Rachel was better-looking than Leah. He then set to work to get the younger sister as well. He persuaded his wife to invite her sister over on a visit. Being a young girl in her teens, the invitation was gladly accepted, as promising a welcome change from the monotony of her own home. When on her way, and still some distance from the married sister's home, a band of armed men met the chair in which the girl was riding and proceeded to take charge of the cavalcade. A long piece of red cloth was thrown over the chair as a sign that the girl was about to become a bride. It was no use to protest, as the girl was quite defenceless in the hands of the armed men, who knew all too well what to do in such cases. The girl had expected

583 622 to arrive at the castle as a guest, and here she was taken as an unwilling bride. The guest was kidnapped to be the second wife of her sister's husband. When the outrage reached the ears of the girl's people there was, of course, a great row, for as a bride to another husband the girl was worth many thousands of ounces of silver. But possession was again nine points of the law, and the Earth Eye held on to the girl who had had such a surprise on her arrival at her sister's home. Mr An wooed the new arrival so persistently that at last she consented to his plan, and the two sisters were thus wives to the same husband. Perhaps in their fondness for each other they imagined that the arrangement would work out smoothly. If they did so, they were deceived, for there was constant trouble and jealousy. The father was furious, but furious among these Nosu chiefs can usually be translated into so many hundreds of ounces of silver. With the passage over of these hundreds of ounces of silver the friends were placated and Leah and Rachel were left to work out a problem which has never been simple of solution. The matter became somewhat tragic as the affections of the Earth Eye centred more and more on the sister with the prettier face. A few years after the death of Rachel reduced the household to the condition in which it was before the kidnapping of the unsuspecting guest. The husband will probably never fully regain the affections of the first wife.

425 622 There are two sons of Earth Eyes in the mission school where I am writing. One is a gentle, intelligent lad, who hopes later on to complete his education in an English university. The other is a wild young rascal, who is even now capable of almost any wickedness. There is, however, something fascinating about him, and we are all only too

willing to do what we can to help him in his many troubles. 425
His aunt has tried to get him murdered so that she may, as 622
next-of-kin, appropriate his lands for her two boys. She has managed to get his brother imprisoned for life, and now there is just this one young fellow between her and the realisation of her ambition. There was a big row here once when another Nosu came to school, and it was suspected after a while that his principal motive in coming was to assassinate the young fellow who was in his aunt's way. The dagger that was to have done the deed is in the safe keeping of a fellow-missionary, and has as its companion a long, ugly but very sharp sword, covered with dried blood, the blood of an old man who lived just across the valley from here, near the magnolia-tree. The murderer threw the sword away when he escaped after his foul deed.

The land where Nosu Earth Eyes rule means a land where 000
there are intrigue, lawlessness, gross immorality, robbery, rape, murder and much else that is horrible to contemplate and still more horrible to come into close contact with. Now that the corrupt rule of the Manchu auction over mandarins has ended it is time the Chinese Government broke once for all the power of these lawless Earth Eyes. It is a blot on the civilisation of China, and should be wiped out if China ever wishes to be reckoned one among the powers of the earth.

[p. 170]

CHAPTER XVI

MORALITY OF THE ABORIGINALS

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ONE of the Nosu who went across the Yangtse with us was a relative of the people who lived at the See-tich farmstead. Going outside the house on one occasion, I saw a number of the slave girls of the establishment "ragging" this young fellow in a more lively way than he seemed to relish. They were pushing and pulling him about quite roughly, and apparently very much enjoying the fun. The young fellow, being alone, was no match for this lively bevy of farm girls. Ragging is more common among Orientals than has been supposed. One can pick up some lively stories of the ragging of Chinese bridegrooms by the women of the household when he takes his bride home to her friends on the third day after the wedding. Here again we found that in Nosuland the scene we looked on, where the young man was getting quite the worst of the fun, was in accordance with Nosu customs. If a young man pays a visit to any of his relatives the women and slave girls of the household are allowed to get what fun they can out of the visitor. If he objects, this only adds more fuel to the fire of the fun. If he is good-natured and joins in as heartily as the rest he wins the respect of the girls, which is quite worth winning. One part of the fun is to get a gourd of water and try to throw it all over the visitor. He, of course, knows what to expect, and is on his guard and pays them back as well as he can.

My Chinese "boy," seeing this ragging going on, wondered 522 why this Nosu relative took it all so meekly. He resolved 562 to go to the rescue. He had the usual Chinese ideas of the inferiority of women, and though he himself has a wife who is far smarter than he, and knows how to rule, he still keeps up the fiction that women are inferior, and should always be submissive to their husbands. As soon, however, as the Chinaman went to the rescue of the ragged man the Nosu girls gave him such a time of it that he was glad to clear out in quick time, a wiser man. The girls were having fun with the relative, but with the Chinese it would have been dead earnest, and he was wise enough to take the hint. He resolved not to interfere in family affairs, even though his Chinese sense of propriety was grossly outraged.

In the relations of the sexes the aboriginals of West China 562 differ widely from the Chinese. The purdah and the zenana are unknown among the former. In fact they have gone to the other extreme. Men and women freely mix together, and talk without restraint. With the majority of the tribes and clans this has resulted in gross immorality. One reason why 000 the Chinese so despise the aboriginals is that the latter are so openly immoral and engage in practices which are abhorrent to Chinese ideas. It does not follow for one moment that because the Chinese so despise these aboriginals they themselves are pure and moral. The Chinese have an ideal of purity, and to their eternal credit let it be said that they have never exalted or deified vice. You may go into any of their temples all over the land and see nothing in their idol statues which will shock your sense of decency. You get a far greater shock in Western picture galleries than you do

OOO in any of China's temples. The teaching of the sages, the open exhortation of the officials, the tradition of the countryside, all are on the side of the angels, and he who knows these things only comes to the conclusion that China is a moral country.

He who knows what goes on behind the scenes, he who knows the secrets of hospital medical work, he who has lived in the villages and heard the stories told around the fire, he who listens to the first swear words the little children, both boys and girls, learn, he who has watched two women quarrel and understood all that they said, knows that though the moral traditions and teachings may have put a respectable covering over everything, down underneath the elemental passions are working, conquering and often destroying much of the life of China.

A few years ago, in the streets of Chentu, that great beautiful city of West China, I noticed over the doors of some of the houses slips of bright red paper pasted up on which were written various virtuous mottoes. The sentiments of these mottoes led one to believe that the dwellers in these houses were people seeking truth and honouring the highest. But looking in beyond the portals one found some of the lowest, most degrading dens of the city, where opium slaves were ruining themselves body and soul. To have the mottoes is better than not to have them. Even a spark of honouring the true and pure is better than an open blazening of immorality and evil. But though this is better than nothing it does not count for a great deal.

The aboriginals do without the coloured-paper mottoes. They come out into the open with much that China hides up. In my opinion the Chinese are wrong in their verdict, for it is not given to the pot to call the kettle black. Both are dirty and sadly need cleaning.

Four of the aboriginal tribes with which I am acquainted are very immoral, though some of the grosser sins which exist to a large extent among the Chinese and are reported to be rife even among some of the ruling classes, as they were rife among the ancient Greeks, apparently are unknown to them.

How to fight against these sins and how to make those tribes-people who become Christians live pure lives is one of the greatest problems facing the Christian teacher. After ten years of such work I can say that while the failures have been many the successes have been many also. Christianity does give men and women a power they never had before, and the worship of Jesus, the great Friend of women and children, does centre the thoughts and affections on One in whose presence impurity burns up.

Discussing this question, one feels that in addition to the purifying influence of Jesus, which is the most powerful weapon we have at our disposal, all Western teachers who come to China should make efforts to cultivate the love of sports and athletics in all Christian schools and homes. Years ago there was great prejudice on the part of China's young men and women against such, but a great change is coming over the people, and it would not be a surprise to some if after a few years the champion football teams of the world were composed of players from China. This field of athletics is almost a virgin field practically unworked, at any rate merely worked on the surface. The introduction of sports and athletics, with its accompanying cultivation of strong bodies, will, I am sure, do much to enable the youth

000 of China, both Sons of Han and aboriginals, to conquer in the fight against the passions which have done so much harm to them all.

541 The Nosu men would readily take to sports. With their splendid little ponies, almost human in their intelligence and responding so readily to the wishes of their riders, one can imagine that polo would be very popular, and horse-racing, without its vice of gambling, would stir the hills far more than the biggest of clan fights or the most promising of raids into Chinese territory. Horse-racing is not unknown in West China, and at one of these equestrian trials a Nosu horse owned by my friend Mr Long easily beat all comers. The prize offered by the official in charge of the Republican Commemoration sports was but a small one, and Mr Long refused it. He merely had his horse decorated with a long piece of red cloth and had it led all around for the spectators to look at. There is one tribe that once a year has a bull-fight among all the bulls of the neighbouring villages. The final conqueror is also decorated with red. This debasing custom missionaries are stopping, with the consent of the people.

533
292 One evening while we were at See-tieh there was a break in our yarning by the fire, caused by the arrival of two singers who were anxious to show the visitors what they could do. Standing awhile outside the door, one of the singers sang:

I am a young man and not clever,
The clouds are coming up over the heavens,
The crows are croaking:
Will there be any fruit on the trees?
My wrist is just made for a golden bracelet.

Being assured that there might be some fruit on the trees—

i.e. some gratuity to the troubadours—they entered the house. 533
They wore white turbans, with a great horn of cloth sticking 292
out from the side of the head. The chief singer began to sing, moving across the room in slow fashion, and going through various movements of the body as he did so. His actions and song were then repeated by the second singer, who seemed to be a kind of understudy of his leader. The first wore felt socks and straw sandals, the other was barefoot. Each had on the usual dark-coloured cape. They sang about the good old days when they were so rich that they could even chop up pieces of silver to feed their pigs with, and when their master was the richest and best in all the world.

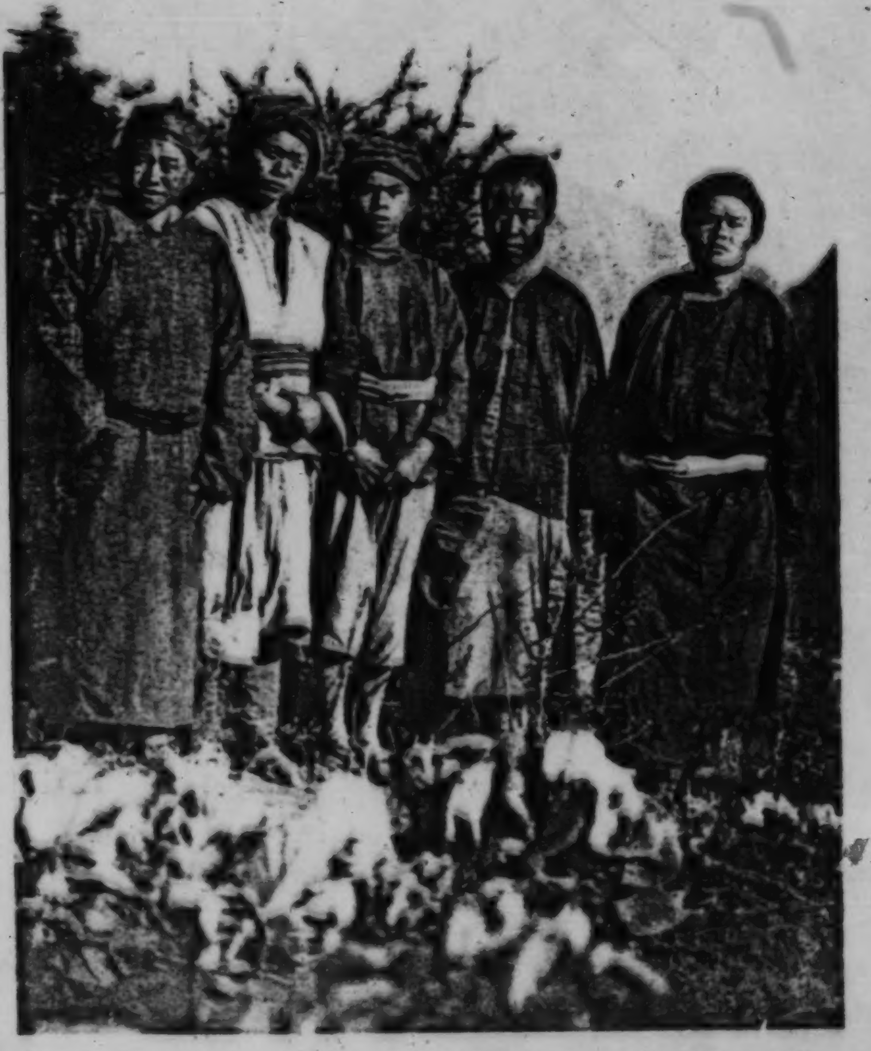
To me the entertainment was a very tame one, but it 000
pleased the others and therefore pleased me. The two singers had a look at my watch, and were startled at the ticking of it. The widow with the gorgeous robes was deeply interested in it and tried to get some of the other women to put it to their ears. They were too afraid to do so. The fear of magic was too strong with them. Their curiosity was more than baffled by their superstitions.

There was one of my movements which excited them very much indeed. When I wished to change the plates in my camera I got under my wadded sleeping quilt. They wondered what in the world I could be doing under that quilt. At last one of the men walked across and felt the quilt. Immediately he had done so he cried out: "He is still there." He evidently thought that I possessed the secret of becoming invisible. If some of them could have been with me a few years ago at the Egyptian Hall, what would they have thought?

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

[Plate facing p.176]

291
142



A GROUP OF ABORIGINALS

The one on the right is a noted wrestler.

513 The temperature indoors in the morning was 42° F. Going outside a little later on, with snow all over the ground, I saw one of the young men with his cloak over him lying in a field fast asleep. Men who can stand such exposure are very hardy indeed.

576 574 After I had had a shave, an operation in which the people were greatly interested, I sat down to write up my diary. While doing so a wizard came in, bringing a skin of wine to offer to Ah-pooh and his guests. He put the skin on the floor in front of a trencher and then dipped out a basin full of the liquor, which he poured into still another basin. The nephew of the wizard then offered this to the old man as head of the household. Had the lady, Ah-hleh, been present, he would have first offered the wine to her, but by her being absent the husband got it first. The nephew bent one knee to the ground as he made the offering, being very careful to turn his head aside lest by any carelessness he should breathe into the wine. After giving the basin to Ah-pooh the nephew gave basins to the guests in turn, going, as he did so, through the same ceremony. Then came the turn of the retainers and others who were present, and when offering to these the nephew stood up. The host and the guests may drink their wine slowly, but the retainers and slaves must drink their basins empty at a draught. Otherwise they are supposed to be disrespectful to the host, their overlord. Ah-pooh drank four basins of the wine.

431 After the presentation of the wine the wizard stated his business. He was going to get his son married and had not enough sheep for the feasting at the ceremony. He expected a lot of guests and wanted the old gentleman to assist him in his difficulty. The gift of wine is supposed to open the

431/ generosity of the heart and to make it more probable that a request will be granted. A gift of wine usually means that there is a request for some favour to follow. When an overlord wants to put an extra impost on his tenants or retainers he follows the same course as the wizard. He calls them all together, gives them a good drink of wine, often even getting them quite muddled, and then he unfolds his plans. These are frequently agreed to on the spot and carried out in soberer moments when there is not the same enthusiasm for the overlord's interests. I think the wizard got a favourable reply to his request for help in connection with the coming marriage. As a rule the overlords find it pays them to treat their own people fairly well in such matters as this.

136 Around the farmstead were a number of wax-trees, and on these were resting a colony of magpies. They fled before our approach, and as they settled in a field near by I counted over fifty. There is a story that in the old days the magpies were all white and lost part of their whiteness as a reward for being the bearers of evil tidings. These birds are very tame and, like their relatives the ravens, are arrant thieves.

000 News was brought to us after the wizard left that there was a plot brewing among some of the clans who were not friendly to the people we were visiting to capture Mr Long and myself as we should return towards the Yangtse later on. This was the first news of a well-concocted scheme, at the bottom of which was Mr Tien and the Chinese at the ferry market town. They were going to play another game with us and hoped that we should be the disastrous losers this time. Two strong unfriendly tribes have their lands bordering on

000 the point where the ferry crosses to Nosuland, and it was thought that if the proper warning were given these tribes could easily muster enough men to capture us at the ferry and hold us to a ransom which would bring wealth to the leaders of the men capturing us. This news very much upset the friends with whom we were staying, and they resolved if necessary to make a fight out of the trouble. They considered that it would be to their eternal disgrace if they permitted their guest to be kidnapped or captured by their enemies. Some of the young men were keen on having a big row.
175 They always delight in a raid or a clan fight. In the last century, when the great Mohammedan struggle was in full swing in the province of Yunnan, the Chinese sent across and hired a thousand Nosu to fight for them. In the early days of the struggle the Chinese troops were utterly unable to stand up before the rebels. I have been told that over and over again ten followers of the Prophet would defeat and chase in hot pursuit a hundred Chinese. The hillmen were of a very different stamp, and they, with our host Ah-pooh among them, defeated the Mohammedans several times. There was, however, not much advantage from these victories, for the crass Chinese officials pursued their usual insane policy and pocketed the money sent for the pay of the auxiliaries. The Nosu soldiers, of course, resented this, and determined to get equal with those who were squeezing them. One day when there was a big fight on the Nosu allies retired from the contest and left the obnoxious Chinese officials to bear the brunt of the battle. The Mohammedan troops were only too ready to profit by this change and killed a number of their enemies, including the men who had brought about the crisis. After this fight the hillmen returned home and, learning a

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

lesson from the ease with which they had beaten the 175 Mohammedans, they determined to engineer a big raid of their own. The A-lu and Ma clans in the north joined them, and to the number of a thousand they entered Chinese territory in the prefecture of Tong-chuan. On the return home again they were the bearers of immense booty. In the years when the Mohammedans were in rebellion the state of the ordinary people was very pitiable. The old folk tell stories now of the hardships of those days. Some of them have also told me about these raids of the Nosu, when houses were burnt, young people carried off into slavery, and babies dashed to pieces against rocks so that they should not encumber the raiders on their march with their booty. Those were bad old days, and may even come back again.

CHAPTER XVII

A TRIO OF MYSTERIES

P. 180

173 IN one of the Nosu books I was trying to read, with the aid of a wizard who knew no Chinese, I came across a curious diagram, which looked like an inverted evolution chart. It is supposed to represent the course of a flowing river, and at the side gives the stations where various persons and animals may drink.

At the source of the stream, where the water is purest and uncontaminated by the overlords, the Earth Eyes have their drinking station. Next in social rank to them come the Black Bloods, followed by the White Nosu, the ordinary tenants of the Earth Eyes or Black Bloods. All this is plain sailing and easily understood. But the surprise of the chart comes in the next step. Here there is a drinking station assigned to the Lama, or the Oo-Chi La-ma, to give the name in full. I asked my weird pundit who were the Lama, who ranked below the White Nosu and above the slaves. He informed me that these were the Tibetans, who were a degenerate branch of the Nosu. This statement was one of the most remarkable I had as yet heard from any of these people. More than once have I heard the Nosu claim that the Tibetans are Nosu, and there is a tomb of a wealthy member of that race who lived and died in Chinese territory where such a claim is cut on the stones. Some of the wizards at times wear a head-dress similar to the ceremonial hats worn by some of the Tibetan Lamas. Not long after I had talked this matter over with the wizard pundit and other Nosu friends a Tibetan Christian came to my home with a missionary who has spent years on the borders of Tibet. I got one of the independent Nosu from north of the Yangtse and this Tibetan together, and tried hard to see if there was anything in common in their speech. We had no success whatever in the attempt. Neither could understand anything the other said, and at last the two gave up the attempt and agreed that they had nothing in common. This Tibetan came from the neighbourhood of Lhassa. With Tibetans who live in Eastern Tibet, where these last years there has been such a struggle with China, a fellow-missionary who is an authority on that borderland and its peoples assured me the case is very different. He told me that there was a good bit of similarity between the speech of these Tibetans and the Nosu. It seems probable that the claim made by the Nosu is correct. If so, in these Nosu one is in touch with one of the very early races of Asia. There is, however, one problem in connection with this question which is not easily solved. Buddhism is all-powerful throughout [179] Tibet. In Nosuland I found no trace of it at all. There are no temples, no priests, no idols, and polyandry, that eccentric custom of the great Lama tablelands, is unknown among the brave hill tribes. There are customs almost as revolting, such, for instance, as a father claiming his widowed daughter-in-law, but one woman having several husbands is quite unknown.

Then again the Tibetan written language and literature are very different to that of the Nosu. This, however, may not be a certain proof of the dissimilarity of origin in the two peoples, for the Tibetian written language was not originally their own.

173 At any rate there is the statement in one of the Nosu books that the Lamas rank as part of the Nosu people taking a quite low position in the social scale.

773 From some of the hills of Nosuland can be seen the great white snow-covered ranges of Tibet, those white hills which in clear weather can be seen immense distances, and when once seen are never forgotten. As the snow on the tops of these distant mountains never melts away, the Nosu think that it cannot be snow. To them these mountains are magic mountains, where dwell a large number of white maidens. They say that no bride can ever cross those white ridges.
000 Whenever a bride appears the white maidens come out and bewitch her away. Perhaps some such story as this has prevented the Chinese officials and their retinue, who used to go, as representatives of the Chinese Government, into Tibet, from taking their wives with them. At any rate, while in Tibet, native wives were provided for them all. These women do not seem to have objected to the temporary union. One of the officers who was in Tibet during the late Chinese fighting (1918) told me that when one town fell to the Chinese troops the commander received, as his share of the booty, twelve such Tibetan women.

Our stay at the See-tieh farmstead came to an end at last. When we left we felt we were leaving friends behind, whom we promised to visit again before long. One of Ah-pooh's sons was a fine, well-built young man named Vri-ntee. He was recognised as the leading man in the whole district, and was looked up to by everybody. Because he declared himself the friend of the Englishman who had come into his land no one in that district dared to turn traitor to us. The constant friendship of these people was largely owing to the attitude

taken up by Vri-ntee. He was married and there was at 000
least one little girl at that time old enough to take notice of the visitor. Whenever any important move was to be made by the people, the advice to be finally followed was given by the father of this little girl. In writing of this fine man one remembers a remarkable verse in the Old Testament which describes a certain " captain of the host of the King of Syria, a great man with his master, and honourable, a mighty man of valour," and then a tragic end to it all, " but he was a leper." This terrible verdict was later on to be passed on the tall, upright Nosu chief of See-tieh. In the days, however, when I was there, no one dreamed that such a fate was in store for Vri-ntee. If there is one thing more 164
dreaded than another by the Nosu, it is the disease of leprosy, which is all too common among the peoples of West China. So dreaded is this disease that in some provinces the Chinese officials have begun to adopt the barbarous plan of killing all the lepers off. Usually this unfortunate class of sufferers is allowed to wander all over the country-side, begging their way, and causing terror to many people. Some of the more advanced and hardened of these leper beggars adopt means to terrorise people. They will gather in a band at any house where a wedding is to be celebrated, and refuse to leave until they have been paid a good sum of money. How to deal with these folk is one of the many problems facing China. She has so far shirked this and all similar problems, but the time has come when she will have to deal in earnest with all these social questions which mean so much in the life of a nation.

A few years after my stay in See-tieh Vri-ntee discovered 757
a sore on his body, which did not disappear as the days and

757 months passed. As in all similar cases, he either left it alone or consulted a wizard. If he had been in Chinese territory he would probably have used medicine of some kind or other. But in Nosuland medicines are practically never used. This again is a unique feature of this remarkable country. The Chinese who live in the surrounding districts are great believers in drugs, and the hill land of West China is one of the principal parts for collecting the many herbs used in the Chinese pharmacopœia. The trade in dried herbs for medicinal purposes is one of the great trades of West China. The wizards could do nothing with the sore on Vri-ntee's body and at last he began to get very uncomfortable. The suspicion crossed his mind that there was something serious the matter, and he lived in the dread that he might, after all his years of prowess, become an outcast, despised and feared even by those who now respected him so much. Being a wise man, he kept his fears to himself, not sharing them even with his wife or children.

000 When leaving See-tieh and before we were many miles away from the hospitable farmstead, a man on horseback came riding hard after us and shouting to us to stop. We waited to know what he wanted. He asked Mr Long and me to step aside from the others in a rather mysterious way. Then we all squatted on the ground to listen to whatever the horse-rider had to say. He then unfolded a story that distressed him very much. He had a son at home who was a leper, and hearing of the fame of the guest who had so unexpectedly come among them, he had ridden after us to know if I had any plan by which I could cure his son of this terrible disease. One, of course, could hold out very little hope to such. The foreigner might have a great reputation

for magic and occult powers, but brought face to face with 000 leprosy, one's reputation does not last very long. The father went away downhearted, and we pursued our journey with a cloud hanging over us. All had seemed so bright, and then came this incident, which let light into the gloom prevailing in some of the homes of Nosuland.

When Vri-ntee discovered that he was getting no better he resolved to go into Chinese territory and tell his story to Mr Long, who was much respected by the friends at See-tieh. Mr Long ridiculed the idea of leprosy. I think he was afraid the suspicion was a correct one, but realising what it would mean for his Nosu friend, he laughed at it and cheered his visitor all he could. At last he suggested a visit to the missionary hospital at Chaotung, where the physician-in-charge, Dr L. Savin, was working hard, and with much success, to relieve the great suffering which in that as well as in other Chinese districts is all too prevalent. The fateful journey was taken, and I am sure no one of the party travelling over the hills dreamed what was going to be the outcome of that visit to the doctor. Ever since my stay in Nosuland the men from north of the river had felt that there was someone in the large city who would give them a welcome, and consequently it was by no means an uncommon thing to see a black-cloaked independent Nosu walking in the streets of Chaotung. The tall chief from See-tieh went to the city, therefore, with willingness. He hoped that on his return home to his wife and family there would no longer be the hidden fear in his heart which he dared not share even with those most dear to him. Very soon after the party arrived at Chaotung Mr Long and Vri-ntee made their way to the hospital, and the kind doctor was only too glad to do

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

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000 all he could for the Nosu chief. These hillmen have always appealed to Dr Savin, and he has rendered them valuable help on many occasions. That help is well worth having. I remember gratefully how kind this doctor can be. Once when I, in another part of the district, got into trouble with one of the Black Bloods living in Chinese territory, and was so beaten that my life was despaired of, Dr Savin did all that he possibly could do, and did it with a heart full of kindness. This same kindness he showed to Vri-ntee. He soon, however, saw that the fears in Vri-ntee's heart were only too well founded, and that the dreaded disease, which no one out here can cure, had gripped the brave chief from See-tich.

762 While still staying at Chaotung, and wondering what the verdict would be, Mr Long told the doctor that if it were true that the chief were a leper, and if he knew the truth, he would certainly commit suicide in preference to returning home, where all would treat him as an outcast. That prospect this man, brave as he was in many ways, would not face. In view of this terrible possibility the doctor refused to tell the chief the truth, and did all he could to cheer him up, and to take his thoughts off from the dread which was so haunting him. The man, however, refused to be put off in this way. He got hold of the idea that something was being kept from him, and that the doctor was not doing all that could be done. He imagined that even if he were a leper, this doctor, who had snatched so many people right back from the portals of death, could surely save him, who was still a very strong man and in the full vigour of manhood. He got so obsessed with this idea that he resolved to commit suicide, and determined to do so at the gate of

the hospital. His retainers, however, got to know what he 762
contemplated, and prevented him from carrying out this plan. The disappointed chief was in a desperate state, and at last Mr Long and he started out for home again. All along the way the man was gloomy, and persisted in saying that the doctor had a curative medicine which he could have given him, if he had been willing to do so. He now began to suspect that Mr Long was also, for some reason or other, in league with the doctor. After two or three days the party reached Toh-chee, the home of Mr Long, from which the hills near to See-tieh can be seen. Vri-ntee and his men slept the night in a room at the side of the main courtyard, close to where Mr Long was. In the night, when all the others were fast asleep, Vri-ntee got up and went outside into the courtyard. Here, right at the door of the room where his retainers were sleeping, he hanged himself with his girdle. It was not an easy thing to do, and he had to do it with the greatest deliberation. Some of these Orientals are desperate characters when it comes to suicide. I knew one old man who was so full of pain that he could stand it no longer. He hanged himself by the side of his bed with his head only about eighteen inches from the floor. I knew a little girl also who hanged herself from a bush, which was not so high as herself. And I knew a pair of lovers, who could not get married, tie a rope around each other's neck and stand thus together on a rock, from which a tree grew almost horizontally. They jumped together so that the rope caught on the principal branch of the tree, and they died there—hanging down on either side of the branch.

There was a great outcry the next morning when the 000
body was discovered. Word was sent by Mr Long to the

relatives, and the body was put in a good coffin. A number of Mr Long's men then carried the coffin to the ferry at Shin Chan Keo. Vri-ntee's friends were waiting in great sadness on the other side, and the coffin was ferried across to them. The first thing they did on receiving the coffin was to open it and carefully take out the body of their great chief. The coffin was promptly thrown away. A coffin might be a fitting place for a Chinaman or a degenerate Nosu who lived among the Chinese, and had contracted their ways, but in their opinion it was no resting-place for a true Nosu chief, who had lived among the free hills. Vri-ntee was carried back to See-tieh and a great burning was made for him. The farmstead has never been the same again. Ah-pooh and Ah-hleh are gone, and Vri-ntee is gone. The brother who now rules has not the ability of his great brother, and is not held in the same high regard. One is glad to think that no grave held the body of the disconsolate chief, and that the friendly flames of the funeral pyre burned, once for all, all the leprosy out of his body. Never again was he a source of danger to home folk or friends.

When we said good-bye on that November morning, none of us thought that such an end was to be the end of the tall Nosu chief who so naturally took his place as leader among the young men of his clan.

We inquired closely, while we were in independent Nosu-land, whether the hill-people were given to the eating of dried fish, and were informed that while such a diet was not absolutely unknown it was decidedly uncommon. I have known leprosy out here among the members of a tribe which practically never eats fish. I have known some of the men taste fish for the first time at my table. The people do not know what causes the disease. Most of the Chinese and aboriginals 000 are terribly afraid of it, and sometimes take very drastic measures to get rid of it. In a home not far from mine, a husband was taken with leprosy. One night his friends made him dead drunk with the local samshu, and then placed him in one of the flimsily built outhouses. The outhouse was then set on fire, and the drunken leper was burnt to death. All over the West of China cases of leprosy are constantly met with, and the Government has done absolutely nothing to cope with the terrible disease. In fact, in presence of the great diseases which are such a scourge to humanity, China has been almost powerless, and has trusted far more to wizards' incantations than to sanitary or medical reforms. The way in which, at the end of the Manchu dynasty, some of her brightest sons, backed up by full official aid, fought the dreaded bubonic plague, when it invaded Manchuria, gives high hopes that before long this same class of foreign-trained students will fight hard and successfully to lighten the great burden of disease which presses so heavily and disastrously on the people all over the country.

The fact that in Nosuland practically no notice is taken 791 of medicines, and that all diseases are put down to the evil influence of demons, makes the position of the wizards a most important one. Whatever be the disease, the wizard is called in to cast out the demon of that particular disease. The ceremony of driving away the demon of disease is called Kweh-ha. The wizard comes, with all his paraphernalia, to 787 the house where the sick person is. One of the first things he does is to make the invalid breathe on an egg. Then, by means of incantations, the wizard compels the demon of the disease to enter the egg, where it assumes its proper

787 shape, and can be recognised by the wizard. He then cuts open the egg and makes a careful examination. From this he can tell what colour of animal, whether ox, sheep or fowl, is needed to be killed, as an offering to the demon. I expect personal preference of the wizard has a lot to do with the colour and kind of animal needed to persuade the demon to depart. I remember a missionary who was travelling among some of these tribes in another part of West China. He found it very difficult to eat and digest the coarsely cooked meat and meal of these people. Whenever it was a fowl for supper he got on fairly well, and at last he used to pray every day that when supper came it might be fowl, and not tough sheep or goat. I expect the state of the wizard's digestion in some way or other influenced the colour and shape of the animal discovered in the auspices of the egg.

When the diagnosis of the egg has been completed the wizard makes a rough effigy of grass, and rubs this up and down the body of the patient, repeating his charms as he does so. In this way the demon is compelled to leave the patient entirely, and enter the straw man. With due ceremony this straw man is then escorted into the open, and the demon is commanded to be off. As his fee for this ceremony, the wizard gets a leg and the skin of the animal which is killed, or sacrificed to the demon of the disease. Seeing ox-skins have become very valuable these last few years, it is no wonder that the wizards are glad when the life of such an animal is taken to grease the departure of the disturbing demon.

791 The profession of wizard is fairly profitable, but it is also not without considerable danger. I realised this one night when I saw a wizard sitting at the back of the house, sheltered

by the usual felt cape, and by his side a second wizard, going 791
through various incantations on behalf of his confrère. I was told that in driving the devil away from the sick person this disturbing force refuses to go far unless compelled, and instead of accompanying the straw effigy into the open, and jumping on to any person who might pass by that way, it makes a straight cut to the wizard's person and dwells with him. Hence the second incantations to make sure that the wizard, in curing others, has not done so at the expense of his own health. This fear undoubtedly has its origin in the fact that many of the diseases attended are contagious, and now and again the wizard catches what the patient is suffering from.

There is another way in which the profession of wizard is hazardous. He is supposed not only to be able to drive away demons but to cause them to enter people as well. This perhaps gives him great power, but now and again it leads to his undoing, as any great calamity is put down to his cursing powers. As long as he is powerful enough and of sufficient importance to the lord of the clan, he is strongly entrenched, and cannot be touched. Now and again, however, he falls into disfavour, and then his enemies will do their best to ruin him. I have known cases where severe corporal punishment, if not actual murder, has been visited on these dreaded but no longer powerful wizards.
Sometimes one of the chiefs will send for all the wizards in 791
his clan, and will have a great festival, at which the chief 754
thing done is a great cursing of his enemies. When there is such an important gathering of the profession, the pay for a day and a night's cursing is a hundred fowls, a hundred goats and nine oxen. These are all killed and eaten. It

791 can be imagined that such a carnival of cursing attracts
754 people from all families in the clan. After such a festival all the evils that befall the persons cursed are ascribed to the work of these wizards. As sickness and calamity are all too common, it is not likely that these gentry of the black art will quickly be put aside as failures in their special line.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

CHAPTER XVIII

ON THE MARCH AGAIN

ON the morning when we left See-tieh we were up soon 000
after six o'clock. It had snowed a good bit during
the night. Some of the snow had come through the
boards of the roof and fallen on to my bed. I had covered
myself with all that I had, and had crept right down under
all, but I found it very cold in spite of these precautions.
We found that the snow on the ground was not so deep as
we had feared it would have been, and we were not prevented
from proceeding on our journey still farther into Nosuland.

In preparation for our journey, the friends at the farm- 262
stead had cooked a lot of maize cakes for us to take on the
road. We were very glad indeed to have these provisions,
for that day we had to walk twenty miles in the snow, and
there was no chance of a meal till late.

As we were travelling along and I remarked that I was 136
getting hungry Mr Long told me that I ought to imitate the 825
bears and lick my paws. Black bears are very common in 262
Nosuland, and in the winter, when they hibernate in the caves,
the people say that they keep off the hunger of the long months
by licking their paws. For this reason the Chinese associate
great virtue with these paws, and pay high prices for them.
They are used as a special dish in their high-class feasts.

Soon after we got away from See-tieh we passed a small 251
village, where lived one of Ah-pooh's grandsons. In the front 685
of his house, out in the open field, was a sight which in Chinese

[251] Yunnan would have been deemed marvellous. Stored on a
685 platform in the centre of the field was a great quantity of
ripe Indian corn. I asked whether anyone kept watch over
it at night, and was told, "No." They said that no one would
steal in these parts. The Nosu steal from their enemies or
from strangers, never from their own people, and never at
all without the permission of their overlord. I expect the
latter permission is as easily obtained as were letters of
marque in the times of the great English naval wars with
000 France and Spain. Such an exposed quantity of grain would
not have remained intact a single night in Chinese Yunnan.
The farmers there have frequently to guard their crops, night
and day, with weapons of some kind or other. In some places
it is one great fight, first to get the grain, and then to keep it.
In places, when the maize seed has been sown wild pigs will
come by night and root it all up again. When the young
corn appears above the ground neighbours' cattle or rich
men's horses will come and do great damage. When the
cobs are on the stalks the enemies become more numerous
than ever. Wild pigs, household dogs, porcupines, monkeys,
bears, rats, all have sweet teeth for the young maize cobs.
And when the grain is nearly ripe, and almost ready for
gathering in, thieves constantly come and steal right and left.
Sometimes, if it is a very rainy night and the watchers seek
the shelter of the little huts built on the banks overlooking
the fields, some bold thieves will brave the elements and
carry off many baskets full of the ripening corn. Even after
the grain is stored in the house thieves are still daring and
plentiful, and landlords who are paid in grain often take so
much that there are only half-meals left for the tillers of the
soil during the rest of the year.

One can easily see how surprised some of us were to see 000 an open-air granary, with no fear of thieves disturbing the farmers. The Chinese say that the independent Nosu are all thieves. They do not, at any rate, steal promiscuously. During the time I was in the land I left everything open, and allowed my new friends to turn over all I had. When I left the country the only thing missing which I could not account for was a box of matches, which possibly fell down somewhere and was forgotten. Compare that experience with the advice given by the late Mr Hudson Taylor to missionaries setting off on a journey, which was to the effect that everything was to be reckoned as lost, and what was left over at the end of the journey was to be treated as gain made on that journey. That was a picturesque way of referring to a state of affairs which has worried nearly every traveller who has ventured into the interior of the Celestial Country.

We travelled up for about five or six miles, and then got into a regular fairyland. The frozen mist and the fresh snow made the trees look charming. Frozen mist on a moorland of low bushes and bracken is one of the most beautiful sights one meets with in this West China hill land. Every leaf and every frond are duplicated, and if you pluck off the ice from the leaves you find all the veins and markings perfectly reproduced. The new leaves of the rhododendrons were all in bud, and the young edelweiss was all over the hillside in rich profusion like stars on a fairy sward. Here and there was holly in berry, bringing back to one a touch of home-sickness, which at times you cannot escape, however hardened a traveller you may be, or however long you may have been away from the yule log and the mistletoe.

Hearing that I would like to purchase a felt cloak, several

437 Hearing that I would like to purchase a felt cloak, several were brought to me at one place or another. The price of a cloak is one, two or even more pieces of ordinary cloth, and cases have been known where a cloak of very fine manufacture has been exchanged for a man. Talking about exchanges, I was told that a fair-sized sheep was worth about twenty catties of salt.

721 Some hill-tops we passed on our way had been the scenes of many fights between rival clans, and we passed these places with a good bit of care and precaution. The raids are so sudden and unexpected that the Nosu are always on the look-out for them. On these hills the way sometimes lay through 491 long lanes, with trees on either side covered with ice. No care is taken of the roads, and the branches often hung over in embarrassing profusion. We sometimes had to stoop down to pass under these branches. Had one been on horseback Absalom's fate would have threatened one many times over.

361 Coming down the other side of the hills, we got out of the mists and below the cloud-line. The scene in front of us was very entrancing. There were villages on the hill-sides in all directions, but never a town anywhere. There is not a town in the whole of Nosuland. Everybody lives on the land. The problems that face Westerners have never yet been dreamed of by these people. They have, however, problems of their own. One of the sternest is what is to be the result of the ever-narrowing circle of Chinese which surrounds them.

764 We passed in one place on a hill-side a ring of stones where someone had been cremated and the ashes buried. There was not the slightest sign to show whose ashes had been buried there.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

From a pack saddle we saw on a horse that passed us we 492 saw that animals have to rough it as well as men. There 231 were two rough, wooden angles joined to a flat piece of wood on either side. This was put, as it was, on the horse's back, without a pad of any kind, and apparently must cut into the horse's flesh. I did not, however, see the terrible sights of wounded horses such as one sees any day on the horse roads of West China. I should think that the Nosu are kinder to their horses than the Chinese, who are at times unmerciful to the beasts of burden.

As we neared the end of the day's journey we came to a 789 rock on which was a piece of coarse bamboo matting. On the matting was a chopping-block, and near by a bag containing something or other. Just what was in the bag we did not find out. This was the work of some wizard trying to get rid of the demon of sorrows. If one only knew how to 000 get rid of the sorrow of all these Nosu and the other tribes! Apparently there is only one way, the way which the Man of Sorrows announced to the world centuries ago, and lost His life in doing so.

The day's journey was finished at half-past two, when we reached a village named Gu-tieh. We were very hungry, and glad to reach the end of our day's march. Entering the wattle gate at the end of the village we were first shown into a slave's house and all sat down by the fire. Here we remained some time, wondering what treatment the lord of the village was going to mete out to us. The first thing given us to appease our hunger was a lot of raw turnips. This 262 place is famous for its sweet turnips, and our men were delighted to get them. I was so hungry that I felt I could 000 eat almost anything. While we were eating the turnips a

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 number of girls came in to have a look at the black-bear man. They were evidently as interested as I was, possibly more so. At any rate they were not in the least bit shy, and were determined to make the best use of their opportunity to find out all about the man who had dropped down among them, so they said, as a star from the sky. So much of what one writes is written from one's own standpoint. It would be nice to know just what those people thought as they saw a European for the first time. Maybe one might learn a few things worth learning if one could get their real opinion, and possibly might feel much wiser and humbler if one knew their minds as well as one knows his own. I would give a lot to know just what those girls thought and said to each other the day after we left Gu-tieh. Whatever the girls thought, I know that the foreigner thinks they were a jolly set of damsels, whom it was a pleasure to see, and he hopes they are living happy ever after with folk who are kind to them.

751 Over the door of the room where we were resting there were hung some small bamboo charms and some slips of wood on which were written Nosu characters. They were charms against evil spirits. I noticed something of the kind over the door of nearly every house we came to. The fear of malignant influences is everywhere prevalent.

262 By-and-by a man came in from the overlord's room with a big bucket of oatmeal and a lot of basins. Nearly all ate the oatmeal with cold water, taken out of a long trough in which the drinking-water was stored. This oatmeal and cold water is one of the most common dishes among all the hillmen of West China. Cold water is put in the basin first, and then several wooden spoonfuls of meal are put on the top of the

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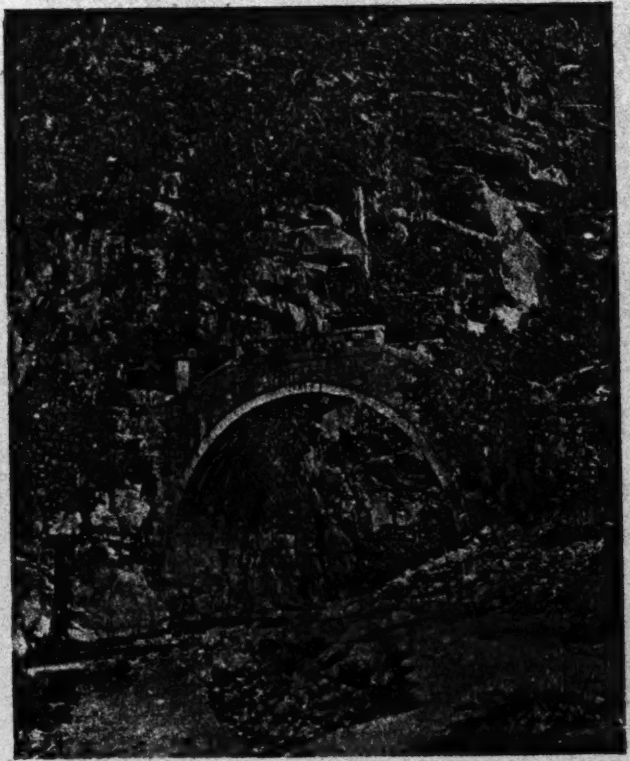
water. The whole is stirred around to a consistency to suit the taste of the eater. Men will travel for days, or even weeks, eating nothing but this. They take the meal by the side of a spring, and often sleep, as they travel in the open at night. To those who like it, these meals of " brose " are very satisfying. I enjoy such meals fairly well, but always have boiling water if it is possible to obtain it. Usually a fire by the roadside is easily made, and boiling water is but a matter of a few minutes if one happens to have with him his small copper kettle.

The amount of oatmeal eaten in this way by some of the men is very great. I have known them eat two pounds, or even three, and I have heard of some eating still more. One man was said to eat five or six pounds of the meal at a time, and on this to go a journey of three or four days, taking nothing on the way but water. This, however, is a phenomenal exception.

Every guest eating this oatmeal was supposed to leave his basin quite clean. Nothing at all must be left in it. The men, both Nosu and Chinese, were very thankful to get this meal of brose. My Chinese boy was beginning to have enough of Nosuland and its food. The absence of rice, and the coarse cooking, with scarcely any flavour of salt, let alone the other flavours which are so highly prized by the Chinese everywhere, began to tell on the tempers of the men who were not Nosu, and they were wishing themselves, like the Hebrews, back among the leeks and garlic of Egypt once more. This, however, made no difference to me. For once I was master of the situation as it concerned them. In their own neighbourhood, if they did not like what was given them at meals they could strike, or resign or take it out of their employer

[Plate facing p. 200]

Specimen of one of the Hill Roads in West China, so Trying to Horses



A well-built Bridge leading to Nosuland, from the arch of which is suspended a Sword to Frighten away Evil Influences

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

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in twenty different ways. Here, however, their only safety was to stick to me. Had they attempted to clear out or run away they would have been picked up anywhere by the first person meeting them, and they would have been lucky to have escaped being made slaves of. It was a treat to have the upper hand for once. Every traveller in China knows what it is to be in the hands of his coolies, who are sometimes unscrupulous men who know only too well how to get their own and more out of their employer. I watched the discomfort of the Chinese, and for once did not feel very perturbed. I knew that if they only held out a few days longer they would probably be back where they would be able to get as much sourkrout and chillies and salt and pork as they cared to eat at a meal.

We had now come to the lands of another clan, the Njeh clan, and the home we were visiting was that of the old chieftain who ruled over his people in all the district. We heard that there was a big quarrel between this clan and another, and that there had already been fighting, with some loss of life. Mr Long was very anxious that the foreign missionary should in some way try to make peace, and in these circumstances we wondered what kind of a welcome the old chief would give us and what we should be able to do for him in the troubles which seemed likely to grow rather than lessen. After the oatmeal was gone we sat awhile, and were then invited up to the chief department, where the head of the clan awaited us.

CHAPTER XIX

HOW WE STOPPED THE FIGHT

574 AS soon as the chief of the Njeh clan invited us up to
his apartments we went. The room we entered was
ten yards long, and at one end there was the usual
fire. The chief was sitting on the other side of the fire, waiting
for his guests. As we came in he made no movement but sat
on where he was, as quiet and grave as if he had been one of
Fenimore Cooper's great chiefs come to life again in West
China. We walked towards the fire and sat down close to
the warm, inviting blaze. The first thing done was a presenta-
tion of wine all round. I don't think they could quite under-
342 stand why I never drank any. While the rest were going
574 through this ceremonial drinking I looked around, and
noticed that the house we were now in was larger and better
built than most of the houses we had been in. The beams
supporting the roof were of great size, and the pillars on
which these beams rested were more than a foot in diameter.
There were four rooms in the house, all without partitions,
and the one in which we sat was the largest. As is customary
with these Nosu houses, the roofing was of thin pine boards.
When these boards are well laid on they defy the weather,
and very little leaking takes place. None of the houses are
built high. I was told that the reason for this was that in
342 the clan fighting house-burning forms an important part of
574 the aim of the fighters. The burning of a house wipes out a
628 blood feud, and life need not be taken after a house is burnt.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

342 574 628 For this reason even the great chiefs do not trouble to build such fine houses as do the Nosu who live in Chinese territory. In the latter I have often seen the houses of the Earth Eyes built in much finer style than the dwellings of the large officials who live in the prefectural cities. Here in Nosuland if a house is burnt down it is not an irreparable loss.

574 Sitting by the wood fire on the floor I was fortunate enough to have one of the house pillars at my back, so that I could lean against it. Just by my side were eight guns, mostly of a rude pattern, far different from the modern rifles which in some way or other find their way into this hill country.

721 628 We soon learned particulars of the fighting which had taken place not long before between the Njeh tribe and several other clans. In the seventh moon seven clans had gathered together their forces, and with a strong band of several hundred fighting men had invaded chief Njeh's lands. At first the chief did not take the matter very seriously, and made no great attempt to resist the raiders. But when three of his slaves were killed and a number of his men captured he woke up. His slaves all over the district demanded revenge, and unless the old man took the matter up seriously he would lose face in the eyes of everybody. Seeing the turn in the state of affairs, and that Chief Njeh was determined to punish the raiders as far as he could, the other side began to temporise and made a peace offer of nine head of cattle. In this way they hoped to gain time for further negotiations, as it was not convenient just then for the enemy to make preparations for resisting a raid into their territory. When the New Year came around, if the further negotiations failed, they were prepared to fight again. It

was realised on both sides that in some way or other the blood- 721
stains must be wiped out. This could be done either by 628
shedding of more blood, by burning of houses, or by payment of an indemnity. For a slave the indemnity is sixty ounces of silver, or an equivalent; for a Black Blood 99·99 ounces; and for an Earth Eye a sum of over a hundred.

Evidently Mr Njeh had heard some marvellous stories of 000
the prowess of the foreigner, for he felt sure that we had means at our disposal which would render his victory over his enemies quite certain. Someone had told him that I possessed medicine which if scattered in the air would take away all the strength of the enemy, and so render them quite powerless. When we were talking about this matter I laughed heartily and denied the possession of any such marvellous powers. The chief was very disappointed that I did not possess in my armoury the powerful weapons he was in need of. He was determined, however, not to be denied, and told us that he would send word to the enemy that I had given him a good supply of the deadly medicine, and that if they did not agree to his terms he would give them a taste of the new powerful weapons I had placed at his disposal. The ignorance of his enemies evidently added much to the strength of his diplomacy. He assured me that his story would be readily believed, and that he was bound to win. We smiled, and wondered. What yarns my men had been telling about me I did not know, but it was very interesting to be living in a world of magic and demons. It was as if one were back in the golden days again, when all the stories of Hans Andersen were more real than all the newspaper yarns the grown-ups and the Philistines were always exciting their brains about. It was grand to be in fairyland once more.

000 Some folk never lose their interest in fairy tales, and I can enjoy these stories even now with a great relish. It may be a sign of peculiar taste, but I am sure I could now read some of the stories in *The Arabian Nights* with far more interest than I could some of Meredith's novels or all the books that Hall Caine has ever written or will write. And sometimes I think that this is, after all, not a sign of a depraved, peculiar taste. While in Nosuland I often wondered what would have happened if the people had refused to believe the yarns my men told them, and had understood that I was just an ordinary British missionary, with the usual characteristics of an adventurous West of England man, but with not a sign of a gun or other weapon in all my house. The truth is, I was a stranger of a type they had never before come across, and had scarcely ever heard of. None of them had time or courage to take my true measure, and after all it suited them to think that an extraordinary guest had honoured them by paying them a visit. Of course I had no means of stopping my Nosu companions from yarning like a Baron Munchausen, for I did not know more than a very little of the language they were using.

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608 After talking about the deadly wonderful medicine the old chief began to propose that the stranger who had come into their midst should become a chief of four of their tribes, the Njeh, the La-chee, the Ren-li and the Nhe. If I would agree they would come in full force to my help at any time, and in return I was to do all I possibly could for them. I laughed up my sleeve, and the very fancy of my doing this kept me merry for a long time.

374 The indoors temperature of the house where we were staying was 30° F. Some of the folk who were not near the

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

fire were very cold indeed. We who were near the burning 374
logs only just kept warm.

The next morning our host brought out a young black bear 136
with a very fine fur, and this he wished to present to me. He said it would make a fine plaything for my boys who were in Chaotung. I was told that some of the bears on the hills around there were as much as four hundred pounds in weight. I have talked to men who have had encounters with these bears. Bruin does a lot of damage to the maize crops, and [241]
has the usual weakness for honey. Many a time he will knock over a hive in order to get at the sweet stores. Apparently all the efforts of the bees to sting them are futile, for the bear goes on with his meal, regardless of all the angry little winged creatures can do. One man told me of an encounter between a tiger and a bear which was witnessed. The tiger stalked the bear and then sprang at him. The bear, however, was ready, and caught "stripes" with his paws. Then he made a supreme effort and threw the tiger down the hill with great force. The latter was so surprised at this unusual reception that he gave it up and ran away. When the hunters are pursued by a bear, which often happens, they run up-hill and soon gain on the animal, who finds it very difficult to ascend rapidly. Some of the animals caught are very fat. In one house where I have stayed two [262]
or three times, the vegetables cooked for the guests are usually fried in bear's fat. I did not notice any difference, and imagined I was eating the usual pork fat. I was told that when the female bear is pregnant she is very mild and will not attack anybody, but as soon as she has her young ones she is very fierce and will attack anybody and anything.

I told my host that I did not wish to take the bear, as I

136 was afraid there might be trouble with it, especially when it got into the neighbourhood of two or three lively English boys. He then said he would catch and bring across to my home a couple of golden pheasants, which were then very
000 plentiful on the West China hills. The insane foreign demand for the skins of these pheasants had not yet reached this district, and those beautiful birds, one of the loveliest denizens of the hills, were left in peace. In the last two years a ruthless warfare has been waged, and in some places the male birds have been exterminated. No wonder the Chinese and aboriginals do not understand why these skins are in such demand, and it is not a pleasant task to satisfy the curiosity of those who wonder. That our women, who are supposed to be the gentler sex, can be parties to the cruel, exterminating slaughter of some of the most beautiful birds in nature, has never yet dawned on the minds of these people. I wish that in some way these birds could know enough of science to secrete some deadly juice in their feathers, which would cause violent headaches to all who wear them, and then there would be some chance of the birds being allowed to continue to live their lives in peace and beauty. It is a disgrace to Western civilisation and a blot on the female sex that so much beauty must be destroyed ruthlessly, that the women may follow the dictates of an insane, cruel, heartless fashion. It annoys one every time one sees a load of these skins going along in the direction of rail head, where they will be shipped to the continent I hail from, and your annoyance is not lessened when some friend, whose respect you prize, comes along and wants to know why there is such a demand for these skins in your country. I sincerely hope that a better day is dawning for the beautiful birds of West

China. It is possible that China will entirely prohibit the 000
exportation of such skins.

The old chief, among his other weapons, had a fine sword, 411
with handle cased in silver and with the hilt ornamented with the same metal. At the end of the handle was a flat, round knob of silver, looking like a small Spanish grandee's hat. The sword was worth about five pounds. I noticed 292
that the chief wore a pair of felt socks, each sock made in one piece and beautifully warm.

In the morning we all clung to the fire, and with the door 574
shut the place was very dark. Except when the wood blazed up, it was too dark to see each other's faces across the fire. As I made my notes I could not see a single letter of what I wrote. It was not too dark, however, to find out that the constant squatting on the floor was ruination to the suit of clothes I was wearing. It did not matter a great deal, for when in Chinese territory I always wear Chinese clothes, and it was only necessary for this suit to keep together until I got back over the Yangtse again.

Our host was very anxious to kill an ox for us that morning, but as we were anxious to push on to another farmstead we begged him to let us off this time. After a lot of trouble we got our own way, and fowls were killed instead of the ox. Once more the chief pressed his idea of making the foreigner head of the four clans. So earnest was he in this that I 1000
began to feel very uncomfortable. In the abstract the idea was all right, and to a wanderer in search of adventures merely, it would be a regular godsend. Anything out of the ordinary is what one likes, and here there seemed a prospect of something very much out of the ordinary. Fancy a missionary riding at the head of a band of Black Bloods,

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 every one of them good horsemen and villainous gentlemen to the tips of their fingers. If one had only taken on the proposal one could have made Nosuland hum for a few years. What would have been the end of it? Would these men have developed an attack of pique, as when they helped fight the Mohammedans, and would they have retired, as they did then, and left me to be destroyed alone? I can imagine how I should have been criticised had I agreed to their plans, and if, after a few years, I had failed, and got away alive, how I should have been laughed at by friends new and old. But what a book one could have written, and what yarns my wife could have told of her adventures as an Oriental princess or a mountain chieftainess! Some men would have taken it on without hesitation. That I did not was owing to the fact that flowing in with my West Country adventurous blood there was something else which gripped and compelled me to obey an earlier call, which might mean less adventure but would surely mean more real success in the end.

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291 While at Gu-tieh I purchased a felt cloak for about seven shillings, and was very glad to get it on over my other clothes. There is a fashion among the Nosu in wearing cloaks. Different districts wear them in different ways. I was duly initiated in the correct way of wearing mine.

000 Some months after we left the hospitable home of the chief of the Njeh clan, who was preparing for his war of revenge, a very fine member of his tribe came across to Chaotung. He was one of the finest of the Nosu I have ever seen, and though so big he moved about the house in the quietest way. He stayed with us for some time, giving me lessons in the Nosu language and telling me much that I wished to know.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

He had a square, well-built face, with one or two side teeth missing. He told me that these had been knocked out in a drunken quarrel some years before. Being clean-shaven, he looked nearer thirty than the fifty he really was. This man, Nya-pa, was wandering about the house one day in his quiet way, for we let him go anywhere and do as he liked, when he caught sight of himself in a looking-glass. He stopped, looked intently, and then there came over his face a look of deep distress. My wife noticed his distress, and asked him what was the matter. He replied: "Do I really look like that?" I suppose he had lived in dreams, imagining himself still a handsome young man, the pride of the country-side, and the hero of all the slave girls. Now, by one fell revelation of the looking-glass, he saw himself as he was, and not as he had dreamed he was. Poor old gentle Nya-pa! We all get that experience sooner or later. 000

We heard from him the outcome of the quarrel between his chief and the other clans. The story of the marvellous medicine had worked the oracle. It had had the effect the chief had prophesied. The enemies had been scared by the reports they had heard of the powerful foreign friend of Chief Njeh and had made full compensation for their former raid. One hundred head of cattle were given, and Chief Njeh was able to lift his head high up again. The visit of the foreign wanderer had been a profitable one for the old man who sat at the head of the fire, in dignified silence, waiting for his guests. 628

CHAPTER XX

RAPIDS AHEAD

562 WE got away from Gu-tieh about twelve o'clock, and made our way towards a farmhouse where lived Vri-ha. He was the man who had met us the first night we stayed in Nosuland, the man whom the Defender of the Yangtse had tried to make his tool, in bringing to a disastrous end the foreigner who had determined to get into Nosuland the unknown. The weather was still desperately cold, and I was glad we were walking and not on horseback. At the end of the first six miles we halted for a while at Shih-ha Chieh-ku. This is a village of a few houses. A number of the people came out to see us, and sat down on the cold ground to watch us at leisure. One woman felt very cold, and called out something to a man standing by. Immediately he came across, sat down behind the woman who had called him, and threw his long cloak over her as well. The one cloak thus sheltered the two. This action of the man struck me at once, and the sight of the two sharing the same cloak was one which I had never seen in China proper, where there is such a barrier between the sexes. Whether it was her husband or her brother I do not know. I thought it was her husband, and was pleased to see how kind he was to his wife. Presently a young girl of about twelve joined them, and they all three huddled together, sheltered by the same cloak. In China, if a husband is with friends, and should by any accident meet his wife on the street, he

will probably pass by, without taking the slightest notice 562 of her. As to putting himself out to share a cloak or an umbrella with her, it was and is almost unknown. Whatever else China is, she is not the land of chivalry. After the Revolution of 1911 things changed somewhat, and women began to come a little more to the fore. Men and women mixed more freely. In places nearer the coast, men and women walking arm in arm could be seen. That, however, is too great a change to be realised in inland China, where old customs are still prevalent, and where the men are still the lords of creation, and treat the women as if they were only necessary adjuncts to their lordly existence. After many years amongst this unchivalrous people, it was a great treat to spend some days among the people where men are not ashamed to be kind to women, and where women are not ashamed to look straight into a man's face and answer his questions. I shall not easily forget the man at Shih-ha Chieh-ku who threw his cloak over the woman, and so sheltered her from the biting cold of that December day.

One of the women who came out to see us had a small 286 wool spinning-wheel stuck in her hair. Every now and again 462 she took it out and began to twist it, letting it fall as she did so, thus making thread from a bundle of coarse wool she had. With this woollen thread a kind of serge is made, and used by the women in making their skirts.

On the way we received an invitation to attend a crema- 000 tion, which was to take place on the morrow. I should very much like to have attended this up-to-date ceremony. It was, however, impossible to go unless we broke the plans made for us by the kind friends we were the guests of.

Up until now I had thoroughly enjoyed my stay among

000 these brave hill-people. The freshness of it all, the absolute un-Chinese life and customs of the people, the friendliness of the farmers, their evident efforts to please, the fact that I was treading on ground no European had ever trodden before, the absolute absence of all the affairs that worry one at a mission-house, the fact that one had to prepare no sermons or conduct catechumen classes, and had practically left all behind one, helped one to feel very jolly and comfortable. No boys at school feel better when half-holiday comes round, or when vacation draws near, than I felt wandering as a black bear in Nosuland. One very rarely gets a holiday in West China missionary work, and wherever one goes the worrying cares of the churches follow one. For instance, as last Thursday I was writing Chapters VI. and VII. of this book in my study, quite forty persons came to me at one time or another, wanting my help or guidance in all kinds of troubles. The variety of the troubles helps one along. If there were not this variety one would soon be crushed mentally under the monotony of it all. Twins are born and the mother dies. The little girls are put aside to follow the mother, but they refuse to be put off in this way. They make such a noise that it is resolved to save them if possible. One woman offers to feed one little one, and now the widower has come to the missionary to see if he can help him out of the difficulty with the other. Typhoid fever has broken out in a village, and the people have sent to the missionary to see what can be done for them. Then a girl comes into the study with the story that her parents have engaged her, against her wish, to a young fellow she detests, and will the missionary help her to get out of the entanglement. Fortunately or unfortunately, the missionary usually sides with all

these young girls who bring such stories, and does his best OOO to get them out of their difficulty. Being happily married himself, he tries hard to prevent any girls being married except where they will be happy. Sometimes after taking up the cudgels on behalf of the unwilling girl he gets let in splendidly by the girl going off to marry the fellow she detests, and doing it willingly. Her visit to the missionary was only one of Fanny's pretty ways. Then comes a woman whose husband is suffering from pneumonia, and she knows it is because a wizard in their village has put a spell on the sick man. Can the missionary come and pray with the sick man, and so break the wizard's power? Then a preacher from an out station comes in with a lot of trouble he is unable to settle. And so on through a long list. As the door closes, and one visitor goes out, I set to work and write a few more lines, fancying a lull is coming at last. But the lull does not come. There appears another face up against the glass door, the door that is window as well as door, and someone eagerly tries to focus his eyes through the glass to see if the teacher is in. Many of the people who come cannot look through glass. Their eyes focus on the glass like a photographer's on the finder at the back of the camera. Girls sometimes use the glass as a looking-glass, taking their hair down and combing it out, quite unconscious of the teacher on the other side, who is smiling at their hair drill and admiring the length of the tresses.

It can easily be imagined that it was a great treat to get away from one's study and all the troubles that walk into it. In fact it was a treat to get right away from China proper, and to enter into a new life altogether.

The days had passed rapidly. The people had treated

000 me far better than I had expected, and I was delighted with all I had seen. But now a change was coming over the scene. It was as if one were in a junk going down the Yangtse. In many reaches the waters are smooth, and you glide along splendidly. After a while, however, the whole aspect is changed, the waters get swifter, the men with the oars no longer sit down smoking their pipes and lazying in the sunlight. Away in the distance you can see troubled waters, and rocks, and at once you know you are nearing one of the many dangerous rapids this river is famous for. All the skill of the pilot is called into requisition. The owner of the boat takes the rudder, and shouts and stamps at a great rate as he impels the men to work their hardest at the oars, so that sufficient way can be got on the boat to allow the rudder to act. He can tell by the feel of the long rudder handle he grasps just how much work the men are putting into their rowing. If all goes well and there is no slip, you safely rush through the rapids and, a mile or two below, sit down again and laugh at the excitement of the descent. But if you slip or let the boat get out of control, then there is a disaster, and some men who will never tell tales again.

In the journey from Gu-tich to Mao-an-tsz I began to feel as if the smooth waters were coming to an end. There were rocks and troubled waters ahead, and I wanted to live a long time yet to tell many tales if possible. What were the troubled waters ahead ? The old saying that wherever there is trouble you must *cherchez la femme* was true in this case. In reality, if there were a woman in the trouble, there were men still deeper in it, and they were really the cause of the troubled waters and rapids ahead. The saying so easily quoted is in reality the coining of men who are the descendants of Adam, and are only too glad to make a woman a scapegoat for their sins, instead of facing them out and bearing the punishment for them. 000

On the road this day one of Mr Long's relatives got into conversation with me, and told me that the chiefs of the four tribes were in earnest in their wish to make me chief of them all. They thought they had discovered in this plan a way out of their difficulties. In order to make sure of me, they suggested going one step further—viz. giving one of their daughters in marriage to the wandering missionary. When I first heard this plan mooted I was highly amused. It seemed such a good joke. Had I been a journalist, and someone else the missionary in this predicament, I think I could have written up the situation in lively style. I fancy I should have enjoyed the joke immensely, and I think I could have made others enjoy it as well. To begin with, the proposal was just fun to me, and I pictured myself going home and telling my wife all about it, trying to make her a trifle jealous, as I explained to her that even if she left me I need not be quite alone, for there were others willing to have me. Strange how a man once now and again likes to make his wife feel that he could be independent of her, while all the time he knows in his heart that if she were gone he would wish to go also.

I heard one of our Nosu friends who had come across the Yangtse with us suggest to one of the Chinese coolies that he should sell the coolie to one of the independents for a horse, and that later on the coolie should run away down to the Yangtse and home. The coolie, knowing that the suggestion was made merely in fun, readily agreed. Then

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

[Plate facing p. 216]

A Small Market Village on the Hills

361

000 they told us of a man who with his own consent had been sold three times, and each time had run away in safety.

342 Some of the houses we passed on our way were built of two or three thicknesses of wattle, and were plastered over with cow-dung to keep out the wind. The people told us these houses were quite warm.

241 Nearing the village where we were to rest that night, we met a couple of horses sent for us to ride on. The one I got on was a fiery little creature, which wanted to be off like the wind. In the running my new cloak got loose and dropped off. The people with me roared at this. Later on the low branches swept off my hat, and there was another hearty roar. Two accidents in a ride of two hundred yards, which was all I rode all the time I was in Nosuland! We entered the village through a lane formed by bamboos plaited together. Each stick being covered with ice, the white lane looked very charming indeed. These fences must have taken a lot of trouble to make. They evidently were intended to prevent the cattle from straying on to the vegetables which were grown in patches in front of the houses.

576 When about to enter a house, the visitor always stops for
a moment and gives a warning cough, that those inside may
not be taken unawares, and that they may come outside and
drive away the dogs from annoying the visitors. Our warn-
ing cough answered its purpose, and Vri-ha was soon at the
door, pressing the visitors to enter. The house was one of
342 the usual low-built houses, roofed with the thin pine planks.
751 A number of the stones were on the roof to keep the planks
from being blown off by the high winds. Icicles were hang-
ing down from the roof, and under the eaves were one or two
of the long spears kept in such places in readiness for use as

342 occasion required. Over the door we noticed the usual
751 charms hung there by the all-present wizard. There were
rams' horns, several hoofs and a lot of small tablets with Nosu characters written on them. In all there were scores of these charms of one kind or another, enough, one would have thought, to have kept all the disturbing influences out of that home.

574 Entering in, we were delighted to see a huge fire blazing
415 away as if delighted to welcome so many guests. Vri-ha's
father, an old man of seventy-four, gave us warm greetings, and we were soon at home once more in one of these hospitable Nosu dwellings. We had only just got seated when the ceremonial presentation of wine was made to each one of us. The wine was just the ordinary grain spirit drunk so freely by these people, but the cups in which the wine was presented were most remarkable. I examined one of them closely and found it was composed of the claw and part of the leg of an eagle. The skin of the leg had been stretched over a wooden cup and the lower part of the leg and the claw formed the handle of the cup. The cup could only be put down when empty, owing to the irregularity of the claws. These were the most curious winecups I have ever seen, and when on leaving I was presented with one of them, I felt I had got a curio indeed. That the cup could only stand up when upside down was no drawback to the Nosu, who have no wish to keep a cup with wine in it undrunk for any length of time. Having taken the cup in their hands, they were not anxious to put it down until empty. I wonder what the eagle would say did he know the use his terrible claws were being put to.

574 Very soon after the presentation of the wine, conversation

574 became general. I took stock of everything and everybody,
and then noticed that by the side of the old man sat his
574 daughter, a young girl of less than twenty. She had the
301 usual long ear-rings of coral and amber beads. One string
of beads was more than two feet long, and the other over
eighteen inches. From each ear also hung about a dozen
silver chains. On one arm were two bracelets of cane, and
on the other, the right arm, were a jade bracelet and one of
silver with a silver lock hanging from it. She was smoking
a long pipe with evident enjoyment, and possibly was dream-
ing some startling day-dreams. This was how I first saw
the girl with the coral beads in her ears.

574

CHAPTER XXI

MORE YARNS AND THE SOLITARY GIRL

THE usual ring was formed around the fire. Everybody who could get a share of its comfort did so. There was nothing to attract one elsewhere. It was ice and snow outside, and when these are about the fire has no rivals he need be afraid of. Every one of the company wanted to know all about Nhe-jah-jah, the foreigner from the land of the sunset, and to see all the things he had brought with him. The little patient figures went through their movements, to the great delight of the crowd around the fire. My clothing, my hat, my watch, my whole paraphernalia were objects of the greatest curiosity. Perhaps the richest fun of all was caused by the pair of red woollen gloves I had with me. When I showed my hands with these red gloves on there was a great shout of surprise and fear. They all thought I was showing them my real hands transformed into that uncanny, blood-like condition. But when I took them off and showed them how they were knitted of wool, there were great exclamations of delight. The girl with the coral beads examined them very closely, and possibly wondered if later on she would be able to make such warm, uncanny-looking things for the hands of the lord of her household. One of the boys thought he would have some fun on his own. So he got hold of the gloves, put them on and went off to track his quarry. Stealthily approaching from behind, he suddenly thrust the two red gloves before the face of an unsuspecting

574 man. The man thought the red hands were at least the hands of a demon of disease, and was very startled and frightened. That imp of a boy had a rare amount of fun out of the blood-red hand, and very possibly influenced the dreams and nightmares of some folk for a long time to come. There was for a short time quite a stirring up of the superstitious fears of men, women and children. I quite expect, however, that some of those folk got their own back again from the boy, and possibly with interest also.

574 888 While we were chatting away I asked the father of the girl with the coral beads whether he had ever been in any fights. The man smiled at the question. and possibly wondered at the simplicity of the questioner. He may have thought I was merely trying to get at him. The hill-folk say there are no old men who have not been in fights. This man had been in many, and still had the scars of some of the combats. He had fought against other Nosu clans north of the Yangtse, and he could also tell of raids into Chinese territory south of that river, where rich booty and many slaves had often rewarded the hardy raiders.

411 Most of the guns used by these people are of local manufacture, being just a long barrel of iron placed in a rough wooden stock. Hanging from the stock is a pair of iron tweezers, with the points near the touch-hole. A long piece of thin rope made from the roots of pear-trees is stuck in these tweezers, and when the gun is about to be used the pear-tree rope is ignited. The fire smoulders for a long time. Pressing this smouldering pear-tree rope against the touch-hole fires the gun. Every man carries a small bone box suspended around his neck, and in this box are a number of touches made of powder wrapped in thin paper, each touch

being about an inch in length. These are stuck, as needed, 411
into the touch-hole, a press of the tweezers lights it, and off
goes the bullet on its enigmatical mission. The people are
adepts in the use of these clumsy guns, and fire them fairly
quickly. The supply of bullets is often carried in the mouth.
The gun is, of course, loaded by the muzzle in the old ramrod
fashion. They kick with a vengeance. We were out one
day on some of the hill ranges when in the distance one of our
men with good eyesight spotted four yellow wolves coming in
our direction. We had just lighted a fire to boil some water, 574
and were feeling very comfortable and jolly. One of our men 411
had one of these old hand-made guns, and it was resolved to 224
have a try for the wolves. Everybody lay down and took
cover. The man who first spied the wolves took a small leaf,
and with it made a noise like the cry of a young deer. It was
done so well that the wolves were arrested at once, and
immediately turned their direction towards the cry of the
young deer. The man with the gun placed his gun very near
the ashes of the fire, so as perfectly to dry the powder inside.
By-and-by some movement or other made the wolves
suspicious, and they stopped. A moment or two after they
came to the conclusion that the young deer spelt danger for
them and, turning again, they fled in another direction. The
man with the gun tried to cut them off, and then fired. But
there was no success. I then had a shot, not at the wolves
but at a stone not many yards away. What came out of the
muzzle of the gun hit the stone right enough, and what came
away from the end of the stock hit my shoulder square
enough. It was a double-firing gun of a truth. I bore the
bruise on my shoulder for many days, and am not very keen
on having another try with an ancient muzzle-loader.

411 Vri-tsuh, a member of the family, was reckoned the crack
shot in the whole district. So often did his bullets find their
billet that the people said they could go around corners
and that it was no use hiding from them. When Vri-tsuh
pointed his gun at you you might just as well come and give
292 yourself up, for there was no escape. While we were at
714 Mao-an-tsz, one of Vri-tsuh's companions dressed up in full
574 war dress and made some sport for us. He is said to have
killed twenty people, and, of course, had a great reputation
as a warrior. He was indeed wonderfully dressed. He had
on a thickly quilted scarlet jacket which stones and bullets
fired from the old-fashioned guns were unable to pierce. In
the back of this jacket was a rent made by a dart thrown at
him in one of his fights. Across his shoulders he had a double
sword-belt, ornamented with polished white stones. From
this was hanging a long sword, with silver handle and with
silver mountings on the sheath. It was estimated as worth a
hundred ounces of silver. The scarlet coat was ornamented
in the centre and at the edges. On his head the warrior wore
a large conical hat in white and red. Around the hat was a
yellow turban, and hanging down behind, a long yellow
pugaree. There were thick flaps to cover the face if necessary.
From the back of the hat there also hung down a long
flap with red edges, and black and white cross-bars. From
the shoulders there was suspended a huge yak tail, and by
the side of this some slips of ornamented Chinese silk. The
yak tail must have been several pounds in weight. It was
very heavy. To complete the array the warrior was in bare
702 feet, and had a modern rifle. He drew his sword and, rushing
574 all about, went through various exercises. He invited me to
throw stones at him, and I did so. Do what I could, I failed

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to hit him. Perhaps a very swift bowler could have got the 702
middle stump, but lively, moving wickets might puzzle even 574
the best of our professionals. The warrior was evidently very proud of his achievements, and he certainly was very agile indeed.

When we were all around the fire again, waiting for the 574
evening meal, I heard some curious yarns. The Nosu say 773
that all rivers flow into the sea, where there is a huge stone with an open mouth which swallows up all the flowing waters. Formerly there were sixty-six suns. A mythical hero, anxious to lessen the terrible heat from all these balls of fire, shot at them with his arrows, and so well did he shoot that he killed sixty of them. Five others fled and took refuge under the sea. The remaining one he shot, and blinded it in one eye. Does this refer to sun spots which may have been observed long ago? What the heat must have been in the beginning one cannot imagine. It is also said that there were seventy-seven moons and that someone shot seventy-six of them. The one left was shot lame in the leg. What that refers to I cannot imagine.

One of the men around the fire had been a great traveller, 574
having visited West and South Yunnan, and what is now the 484
French colony of Tongking. After telling us this he capped all by saying he had been to the "Woman's Kingdom," that mythical country the existence of which was stated in all the old Chinese encyclopædias. When I first came to China nearly all the people one met believed in this country of the ladies, and knew more about it than they knew about England or America. This truthful Nosu traveller said that he had spent some time as a guest of the Amazons, who were very unwilling to let him leave them. I wonder how often he had

574 told that fact to his wife. He only got away at last by fixing
484 a date for his return. This date had long gone by, and I suppose the disappointed ladies have one more evidence of the unreliable nature of the male sex. The traveller described the unknown country quite minutely, and refused to budge from his stories in spite of all the ridicule and unbelief we rewarded him with. He said he could show us the way to this paradise if we were willing to go. I am very sorry that other pressing business prevented me from taking up his challenge and going to visit that wonderful country. The unexplored parts of the earth are getting so few that it was a loss that the chance of such a great journey of exploration had perforce to be declined. Possibly there might have been an atom of truth in his yarn. He may have gone wandering off and become the enforced guest in some Buddhist nunnery, where the lady abbess might have told him some tall stories which he believed and later on considerably enlarged. It was interesting to see that when the man told his story he stuck to it in spite of everything and everybody.

574 The inner circle around the fire that listened to all these
293 stories was composed of sixteen men and the one solitary girl
[301] who seemed capable of holding her own with anybody. From the left ears of all the men hung the long ear-rings. Each had his head horn or poke tied up at the left side of the head, and all faces were bright and merry as the fire shone on them. White rows of teeth were constantly visible, and there were smiles all round, which sometimes developed into a hearty laugh or a tremendous roar. Pipes were constantly going, and I noticed, hanging from the necks of many of the men, the
534 touches for their guns. From the necks of some of them also hung a little instrument of brass or bamboo, on which they

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

played as the jews' harp is played. The principle of the 534 instrument is just the same as that of the jews' harp, and the noise is similar.

Logs were frequently brought in to keep the fire burning well. 574 These logs had snow on them when they reached the fire. 773

Around the fire were not only travellers, there were one or two also who were a bit of philosopher in addition to the rest. One such told me that God originally sent nine men to create the heavens and eight to make the earth. Man originally came from heaven, and has three souls, one of which at death returns to heaven, another goes with the ashes to the grave, and the third into Hades. This last soul is called [778] by the wizards, and put into the little baskets which are worshipped in the corners of the homes. 775 The people have some idea of transmigration, saying that bad men may become animals but animals never become men. I asked whether the sheep which had been killed for our suppers might not possibly have been one of the Lai-lai clan or the Sha-ma clan, two clans at enmity with the Nhe clan, in one of whose houses we were then staying. This idea tickled the crowd around the fire immensely, but the philosopher destroyed the fun by assuring us that the bad men who turned into animals were all eaten by wild beasts. So after all, if the joke were destroyed, we were enabled to enjoy our mutton without any cannibal suggestions.

At night the magic-lantern was a great success. The 574 great interest taken in it by the girl with the coral beads has been described in Chapter I. The slides shown each night were a mixed lot. In addition to a number of sacred slides there were several photos and views of places. The most popular slide of all was one of my wife's sister, and I was

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5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

574 very amused when one young man inquired, through Mr Long, whether the young lady was open to an offer, or whether she had already been given in marriage. Intermarriage with the foreigner was evidently in the air. East and West were not to be separated for ever.

After the lantern show was over we gathered around the fire again, and my boy did a little necessary sewing to one of his garments. When he had finished he gave the needle to one of the slave girls standing by. At this there was a great outcry. All the other girls insisted on having needles also, otherwise, they said, they would refuse to cook the breakfast for us in the morning. So six more needles had to be given away to satisfy the high sense of justice developed in these lively damsels.

The next morning there was a change in the weather. For a while there was an outburst of lovely sunshine, which charmed one into the open, where the view down the valley to the Hsi-chi river was very delightful. The tops of the snow-covered hills, with the sun shining on them, looked very beautiful indeed. And there was a peacefulness over it all that seemed in strange contrast with the warlike people we were among.

574 751 In the sunshine we made a closer examination of the charms over the door, and found among them a wasp's nest and a shin bone. I counted also that there were ten long spears under the eaves, in addition to twenty guns within the house. So Vri-ha's home may be considered to have been well supplied with arms.

574 773 Right down in the valley they pointed out to me a remarkable pool about which a legend lingers. Not very long ago, in this pool, there resided a huge snake, which ate up all the

people passing that way. One day a brother and sister were 574
going by the pool, when the monster came out and seized and 773
devoured the sister. The brother managed to escape. He then immediately swore that he would destroy the devourer of his sister. He gathered together a number of goatskins and packed them with dried edelweiss, in the centre of which he put sparks of fire. The stuffed skins were then thrown into the water, and the monster, thinking they were what they appeared to be, promptly devoured them. By-and-by the fire began to burn and the snake writhed in agony. He came out of the pool and wound and wound himself around some trees growing near by. All night long, while the monster was twisting about in agony, mists rose up from the valley. In the morning, as the internal fires burst the sides of the huge snake and so destroyed it, the mists disappeared and sunshine broke out. The trees have now disappeared, but the stumps are still there.

Writing of edelweiss, one notices that all over the district 372
where it grows, and this is a very wide district, the natives gather the mature flowers, stalks and all, and when they are dried, use them as tinder for their flints and steel, which were universal not long ago and are still very common. One often meets a countryman with his flint and steel, and a small brass box, in which he keeps the dried edelweiss. By these he can get a light for his pipe whenever he pleases; and the shepherds on the hill-sides, who in winter light fires of brushwood to keep themselves warm while the sheep are grazing, readily get the blaze they desire without spending money in buying matches.

Conversation about the pool and the snake led on to the 000
subject of the girl with the coral beads, and the brother and

000 my guide, Mr Long, pressed me to agree to the kind proposal of the chiefs, who were anxious to keep me among them. I told Mr Long I would be pleased to have the girl as a daughter, but as a wife—I already had one wife, and that to an Englishman was final. But to these men that was no argument at all. Mr Long remembered his three wives and the three establishments, and he saw no reason why I should not be as successful in such a venture as he supposed he had
797 been. His affairs were not such a problem to him as they were to us. He had often expressed a desire for himself and family to be admitted into the Christian Church by baptism, and there were many points in his favour. His second wife had showed herself a true Christian by many deeds of kindness and charity, and her children were in our schools. What were we to do? To baptize them meant the sanction of polygamy. To insist on his putting away two of his wives meant the break-up of the homes, and the problem as to what the children were to do was too difficult to solve. Theirs, at any rate, was no sin, and they were not responsible for the dilemma in which we were. I remember telling the story of Mr Long and the problem the plurality of wives gave us to several audiences in England, and invited suggestions for a solution. The neatest solution was given by a clear-seeing little boy, who had noticed what his mother had done when there were superfluous articles about the home. He offered as his advice: "Send two of the wives to the Jumble Sale."

Mr Long's problem has not yet been solved, but the missionary did not follow his advice and create another similar problem which would have delighted many of my new hill friends but which would as surely have ruined the one who now tells the story.

CHAPTER XXII

THE FRIENDLY WIDOW'S HOME

WHEN at last we got away from the home of the 574 girl with the coral beads Vri-ha and a number of friends escorted us some distance up the hill. He begged us to come again next year, promising if we did so to take us all over Nosuland, introducing us to the different tribes. Perhaps he also thought that by that time I might be more ready to fall in with his plans. I was very glad to get away without making an enemy of this powerful man, who could even yet carry out the plans of the Defender of the Yangtse and his scoundrelly accomplices who lived at the ferry town. Just as we were leaving one of the brothers brought along one of the eagle-claw winecups and gave it to me. It was very kind of him, and showed that we did not part as enemies.

We had not gone very far before a man came riding after us on horseback, telling us that the two clans, Lai-lai and Shama, were preparing in earnest for an attack on us in response to the plans of Mr Tien. We were determined that Mr Tien should win no game in our contest if we could possibly help it. He undoubtedly was a keen adversary and wished very much to win, but a win on his part meant so much loss to us that we determined to make all necessary preparations to checkmate all his plans.

After the man on horseback had gone back we went on, 789
and soon came to a pole of cursing, where there had been in

789 the past a rare cursing of the enemy. The old story of Balaam and Balak over and again! The very fact of this cursing often prevents an enemy from coming that way, for he verily believes the occult forces of nature are in waiting at that special place to undo him. He goes around a long way to avoid what he considers a real danger. Another use is made of the pole of cursing. In a quarrel between two adversaries one will kill a dog and hang its carcass on the pole, cursing his enemy well as he does so. It does not at first sight seem clear what share in the quarrel the dog can take, nor why he should suffer in a trouble that he has had nothing to do with. Possibly the idea is akin to that held by the Chinese, who have a similar custom. When there is a quarrel between two Chinese men or women which cannot easily be settled one will take a dog out to an open place, preferably the public execution ground, and then, after stating the justice of his case and cursing well his antagonist, he will kill the dog and send its spirit into the next world to ask for justice or revenge from those who rule in the dark lands of Hades. It is really an appeal to Pluto, and is supposed to set the spirits of the prison-house in motion against his enemy. What a strange life it must be, living amid occult influences and demons who come out at any time and wreck the best-laid plans or destroy all the happiness of one's home.

789 461 574 There is still one more use of the pole of cursing. The hospitality of the Nosu farmers is often abused by a lot of loafers, who in the winter-time, when there is not much doing, make up parties and call on those who live in the lower, warmer levels. In this way they spend their winter months in their kind of a Riviera, and do it at no expense to themselves. By wandering around from home to home, they pass

the time away and enjoy themselves. When these Riviera 789
holiday-makers become too frequent, some of the lowland 461
farmers erect a pole of cursing near their home, and get a 574
lot of wizards to call an army of demons together to infest the neighbourhood of the pole. This news gets abroad, and effectually stops the ban[illegible] from straying in that direction. For once one sees some use in ghosts and a haunted spot. Some others of us who get pestered by unwelcome visitors would like to be able to keep a ghost or two to guard the premises and the quiet of the home from certain folk. One wonders, however, what plans are made to keep the ghosts from interfering with the members of the family that desires their help. Possibly the ghosts get tame like household dogs, which in the case of the Nosu will let alone all whom they know, but tear in pieces all strangers they can get at.

We were going now to be the guests, for a day or two, of 574
Ah-pooh's daughter, the widow in the gorgeous robes, who 342
had been so friendly and had taken so deep an interest in all we did when we were at See-tieh. We were expecting a warm welcome, for Ah-ku, the widow, evidently knew how to be hospitable, and to make people feel at home. As we were walking along we suddenly turned a corner, and there, before us, was Loh-deh, the home where Ah-ku and her retainers lived. It was a remarkably situated place, being the spur of a hill, very difficult of access on three sides, and approached on the fourth by a narrow ridge. A band of well-armed men could easily have defended it against ten times their number. Many of these wealthy Nosu, both in their own land and in Chinese territory, have chosen their dwellings with the one idea of defence. Ah-ku lived on the higher part of the ridge, in a strongly built house, with a large tower adjoining. She

[Plate facing p. 232]

NOSU GIRLS

As they do not wear shoes their feet harden, and when the skin splits it is a common practice to patch them up with needle and cotton.

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757

She
574 has three sons and five daughters, all at home with her.
584 Here again our visit had to do with the marrying of a
daughter, but this time it was Mr Long's turn and I was left
alone. Ah-ku was very anxious to get one of her daughters
betrothed to one of Mr Long's sons, and this was partly why
she had been so pressing in her invitation to us. It is an
expensive thing in Nosuland to marry a daughter of a Black
583 Blood. Two or three hundred taels, say forty pounds, have
to be given for the bride, and Ah-ku was likely to make a
good thing of her daughter's matrimonial ventures. If the
parents of the girl are generous, they will often send their
daughter away with a well-stocked trousseau, equal in value
to a good part of the money presented to them by the bridegroom's parents. If, however, they are near, and bent only
on making a good bargain for themselves, they will send the
girl away with bare necessaries, and keep the silver they have
received for themselves.

574 231 Our evening meal the first night we stayed in the friendly widow's home was prepared in a different way from the suppers of previous days. There was, however, a cruelty about the preparation which would disgust most Westerners. A very fine calf was led into the courtyard, facing the room where we were staying, and seeing they were about to kill it for us, I begged them to desist, saying that a sheep would be ample, and would satisfy all the requirements of the widow's hospitality. But in this request we found ourselves up against an opposition we were unable to overcome. All the retainers, to a man, were against us. They were bent on a good feed of veal, and were determined not to allow the guests to interfere with their wishes.

231 One man led the calf by a rope and another of the slaves

231 stood ready to kill it. He asked for an axe, and one of the girls went off into an inner room to fetch one. Taking the axe, he proceeded to beat the calf to death with the handle of the axe. First there was a big blow delivered over the head, and then there were blows all over the body. It is said that this beating gives the meat a very fine flavour. It was a cruel operation, though possibly the first heavy blow over the head stunned the creature and deadened the pain. Sheep are sometimes killed in the same way.

[352] 574 882 The bearskin I had to sit on around the fire was a very fine one. It was five feet long from neck to stump of tail, and had been shot some years ago by Ah-ku's husband, when he was alive. There was the usual presentation of wine, and one of the sons, twelve years of age, took his basin with the rest, at which the retainers and others laughed heartily. It was not that they objected to his drinking of wine, but to his taking his place with the others and considering himself a man already.

354 Usually in these homes, when a light is needed, some sticks of dried young bamboo are burnt. The stick may be five feet or more long, and one end is thrust into the rafters or a hole in the wall. The other end slants downward, and gradually burns away. By constantly picking off the burnt end, making one's fingers a pair of snuffers, the stick gives a fairly good light. I have sometimes met, at the beginning of winter, a lot of people from a village, going off to the hill jungle to gather their winter supply of bamboo candles. They need to be well dried before they will burn readily. With such lights as these I have known the aborigines learn to read, and make quite fair progress in their books during the dark winter evenings. At Ah-ku's home lights were provided

354 by burning pork fat in shallow dishes, with wicks of twisted cotton. The dishes were first put on the fire to melt the lard, and after that the lamps burned fairly well.

000 It is quite interesting to notice the different kinds of oil which are burnt on the hills of Western China. In Chinese homes, on the gods' altar, which always faces the central door of the chief apartment, the shades of eve see the lighting up of a small lamp on a high stand in which is burnt mustard oil. This is supposed to be the purest oil, and only this is burnt in front of the gods. Any other oil is supposed to be an insult to the deities of the Chinese Pantheon. Years ago this was the most expensive oil, and was reserved, as a rule, for cooking purposes or for the ancestral spirits and the gods. There is very little smoke with the mustard oil, and the flame burns clear. For ordinary household purposes the oil used was that of the tung-tree, the tree that produces the finest varnish in the world. Formerly this oil was only half the price of the mustard oil, but the large foreign demand for the varnish has almost levelled the prices of the two oils. In winter the varnish oil congeals, and then it looks very

173 much like lard. There is a story that one of the great armies of the Taipings was marching victoriously through the southern districts bordering the Yangtse, when they came to a village near to Mr Long's house. Here they found stored a number of tubs of the varnish oil. Many of the soldiers mistook the congealed oil for pork fat, and all through the camp that night the evening meal was cooked with the welcome fat. If there is anything a Chinaman likes, it is pork and pork fat. Now you cannot eat this varnish oil without getting very much upset, and that was the result that overtook the army of the Taiping rebels. Very much

weakened, the army continued its march, and coming later 173 on to the borders of Nosuland, a large band of the hillmen, under the leadership of a famous chief, lay in ambush for them, and in one of the defiles, practically annihilated this branch of the great rebel forces. That wandering army was never again much trouble to the Manchu dynasty. I do not know whether the Manchus were grateful to the Nosu for this signal service. And I have never heard that the famous chief of the hillmen was rewarded. Possibly the large booty which fell to the share of the aboriginals was considered by them sufficient reward for all they had done. After all, it was merely another successful raid they had made, and it was an accident that they had rendered a service to their hereditary enemies.

A number of other oils are also used for lighting purposes. 301 Nearly all of these are now giving place to petroleum, of which large quantities are sold all over the country. In the district where I am living this foreign oil costs about threepence a pound, double the price of the native oils. As we sat around the fire one of the men showed me how to put up the Nosu poke to the left of my hair, and just this simple little thing pleased them very much. Just what the origin of the head horns is one does not know. In Nosuland it is the men who wear the horns. South of the Yangtse, among another tribe, the Flowery Miao, it is the women who wear the exalted horn, as a sign of motherhood. Very occasionally a Miao man may be seen with the horn, but this is rare.

After a few of us had sung some hymns in Nosu and 533 Chinese, one of the men got up and went outside that he might sing to us. His theme was an improvised one and

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

533 was about the guest from the land of the sunset and his friend Mr Long.

A door led from the principal room of the house into the strong tower adjoining, and it was into this tower that Ah-ku and her daughters retired for the night. The rest of us settled down as near the fire as we could, and soon forgot everything in the sleep that is common to all the world, Nosu and Chinese, Oriental and Westerner.

CHAPTER XXIII

HILL WARFARE AND STATE ROBES

DURING the night, snow fell freely on all the hills, 256
and the ground was covered even in the low-lying 462
district where Ah-ku's house is. Very early two 231
of the maids were busy at a stone mill, husking some rice 857
for breakfast. The stone mill in the home is almost universal in all the country places, and husking rice and buckwheat, grinding maize and beans, is one of the chief duties of the women and girls. Some of the mills are very heavy, and need a lot of strength to work them. Occasionally they are turned by persons walking around them and pushing with their chests against sticks tied to the sides of the upper stone. Here and there, in a large village, there is a mill worked by a horse, which is blindfolded. He continues his monotonous round and round all the day long. Were the animal not blindfolded he would soon be too giddy to keep on with his work. I saw some children one day imitating one of these mill horses by catching hold of a pillar and going round and round until they were too giddy to keep on any longer standing up. They then changed hands and went round in the reverse direction, unwinding themselves, as they said. Presently, when they had finished, they stood upright without a trace of giddiness.

Wandering about Ah-ku's house was a tame male pheasant 231
belonging to one of the boys, and in a cage was a dove. One of the commonest of the cage birds in West China is the

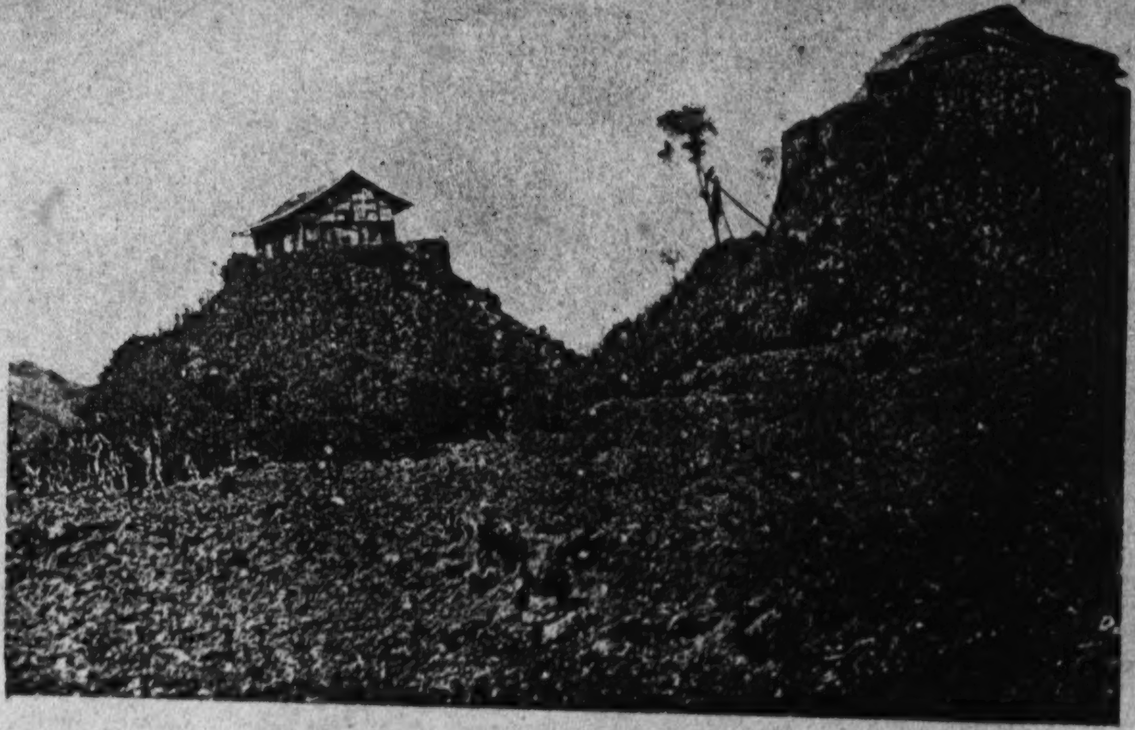
231 thrush. Some of these thrushes which one sees hung up
outside a house sing as if they would burst their throats.
231 Soldiers are very fond of rearing these thrushes, and at first
541 one was pleased to see these men enjoying the song of these
magnificent songsters. It was, however, a shock, later on, to find out that the birds were not kept for their song but for their fighting powers. Matches are arranged between different thrushes, and sometimes large sums of money are laid on the result. If you see a thrush in a cage and ask if it is a fine bird, meaning, of course, can it sing well, the answer will be given, not at all in reference to its powers of song, but solely to its record in beating other thrushes in fierce fight. There is another little bird, about the size of a large tit, which is the most renowned of the bird fighters. These birds are really vicious fighters, and will frequently kill one another in their arranged combats. Large prices are paid for one of these little birds that has been the victor in many combats. The district of the famous salt wells in the province of Szechuan is noted for its number of fighting birds. The birds are taken there from other parts of West China, as around the wells there is not a great deal of trees to attract feathered life.

276 The friendly widow got up late. I have a suspicion that
249 she smoked opium, and in consequence was not ready to rise
648 at the same time as normal folk. Years ago opium was
439 practically unknown in Nosuland, and the hillmen despised
the Chinese for being such slaves to the drug. But since the anti-opium campaign has been so vigorously pushed in West China, many Chinese have gone across to Nosuland and, by large money payments to the chiefs, have received permission to cultivate the poppy. When the poppy-juice

has been gathered in the drug is either openly or secretly 276
taken into Chinese territory, where it commands a high 249
price. The profits of this illicit trade are very large. When 648
warned by some friends that this policy of permitting the 439
poppy to be grown in Nosuland would certainly lead to complications with the Chinese officials, the hillmen replied that in such a case they would take the growers of the drug and hand them over to the proper authorities, to be dealt with as they should deem proper. These Nosu chiefs do not understand the trend of affairs in China, and have not seen that as long as the opium is grown in Nosuland there can be no permanent stoppage of the trade in the drug in the parts of China bordering on their land. And they do not see that if the Chinese Government is determined to stop the use of the drug, they will certainly take steps to prevent the Nosu chiefs from pursuing the policy that is being now carried out. Such a determination might give the Chinese officials the excuse to make a determined effort once for all to subdue Nosuland, and bring it under the same control as the districts which in Yunnan and Kweichow used to be entirely under the domination of the different Nosu chiefs, the Earth Eyes. There are many Chinese who long for the opening up of Nosuland for colonisation, and they would enthusiastically support any efforts to subdue the hillmen. It is to be hoped that the hillmen will be wise in time, and not, for the sake of a little money, sell the safety of their hill land.

When Ah-ku came out of her room in the stone tower 574
she went straight to the fire, and had a good smoke with her 726
five-feet-long pipe before she did anything else. As soon, however, as she had satisfied her gnawing craving for the minor drug, and was so restored to the condition of her usual

[Plate facing p. 240]



HOUSES OF REFUGE BUILT ON THE TOPS OF HIGH HILLS

712

574 726 complacency, she set to work planning for the comfort and amusement of her guests. She gave orders that her servants and retainers were to dress themselves up as for a fight, and to go through a mock battle, that we might have some idea of how the clans set to work when they are on the warpath and after revenge on an enemy. While the train-bands were preparing, Mr Long and I went off for a stroll down towards the lower part of the spur of the hill, where dwelt a number of Ah-ku's retainers.

By-and-by the small band of fighters came down the hill towards us. One was bearing a white flag, the standard of the company. Three swordsmen, elaborately dressed, advanced as skirmishers with the intention of drawing out the enemy. They came running down, dancing about all over the place as they came. They seemed as if they enjoyed the fun immensely. One of the skirmishers was the man who had so barbarously butchered the calf for our last night's supper.

When the whole party had reached a fairly level field, where we were standing, they all formed up ready for a charge on their imaginary enemy. Mr Long and I were supposed to be the enemy, and they charged straight at us. Long spears were levelled, tridents got into position, and the two leaders with drawn swords led the attack. All the while these manœuvres were going on they kept up a constant shout of "Ah! Ah! Ah!" When the real charge came they gave some tremendous yells and rushed forward. At the end of the first charge they retired, with an eye on the enemy, and with weapons levelled all the time. They then prepared for another similar rush. They told me that in actual fighting they pursued such tactics as these. They

574 believe in the short, fierce rushes, accompanied with the
726 blood-curdling yells to strike terror into the hearts of the
enemy. Battles are thus partly influenced by the strongest
pairs of lungs.

725 There is, of course, a good deal of plot and stratagem used, or these people would never have held their own so long. Nearly every year one hears of skirmishes between Nosu raiders and the Chinese. The Northerners among the Nosu are much more given to raiding than the Southerners. A few years ago the Chinese officials got up a punitive expedition to teach the tribesmen a few things they seemed to be very slow in learning. The soldiers advanced, as Chinese troops of the regular army usually do, with plenty of munitions and stores, and with everything necessary to provide the meals of rice and vegetables, without which Chinese soldiers do not care to fight. The Nosu retired before them. One night the Chinese soldiers pitched camp in a level surrounded by some hills. Towards morning, while it was still dark, a number of Nosu drove a flock of goats in the direction of the camp of the Chinese. Between the horns of the goats small torches were tied. Urged on by the driving Nosu, the goats rushed down the hills. The few men who were with the goats yelled out all the Nosu war yells they could think of, and tried to give the impression of a great number of people rushing to the attack. The alarm was given in the camp. The soldiers roused themselves up and their officers led them out to repel the early attack.

In the meantime, by ways well known to these Nosu, their main body of fighters had made a detour, and when the Chinese troops were facing the goats and torches in the darkness these hillmen in the rear fired the camp, and then,

725 in the early twilight, nearly annihilated the regular troops. It was but a very disordered scanty fragment of the Chinese forces that managed to escape and turn up at their base. They brought with them a story of the treacherous night attack in which they had been badly worsted. Instead of teaching the Nosu a few things they had gone to a stern school themselves, where the teachers carried out their lessons in a most unexpected way. By such daring ruses as this, skilfully planned and magnificently carried out, the hillmen have up till now struck terror into the Chinese, who do not relish attacking the "wildmen of the hills." When one heard this story it was most interesting to speculate on why it was that here, among the hills of West China, the tactics used by Hannibal in Campagnia before Fabius should
000 be duplicated. One often smiles as he reads a lot of rubbish about the impassable gulf between East and West. That gulf does not exist. The saying of the Chinese sage, that there exists "one principle throughout all the peoples in the world" is far nearer the truth than the crude placing of the East and West in absolutely different compartments. Those who go down deep enough know that East and West are one. In this connection one can mention a coincidence which happened a few years ago. I mentioned in a former chapter that there was a time later on when I nearly met my death at the hands of some people led by a Nosu Black Blood. In the minds of the Chinese there was a good bit of mystery about this murderous attack on one who had been travelling up and down the district for years, unarmed and unmolested. The choicest explanation was one that was very interesting. It was said that I had wished this Nosu Black Blood to give me a piece of land to build a mission-

house on, and he agreed. He acceded to my request to give 000 as much land as I could cover with the hide of an ox. Gaining his permission, I was reported to have cut the hide into the thinnest of strips, and with these to have enclosed an enormous tract of land which far exceeded any piece the Nosu had intended to give me. When I insisted on the promise being kept there arose a great row, and a fight in which the missionary came off very much second best. To have got such a story as this in West China was worth suffering some inconvenience. Is there some subtle connection between Carthage and Nosu?

Sometimes, in their troubles with the Chinese, the hillmen 721 come off second best. Once, in the days when modern rifles and cartridges were unknown in Nosuland, a band of Chinese soldiers, with belts of cartridges around their waists, entered the borders of the hillmen's land. Spies were sent out to see what kind of men the strangers were. The cartridges in the belts puzzled them at first. Then they formed their own conclusions, and came back reporting that the strangers were sellers of brass mouthpieces for pipes.

The hillmen expected no special trouble with the sellers of brass mouthpieces for pipes, and concluded that the guns they had with them were similar to those carried by most travellers and traders in the border districts. Arrangements were made for a sudden attack. The hillmen rushed on the strangers, expecting to overwhelm them easily. Then they got the surprise of their lives The soldiers had been waiting for this, and when the Nosu got right out within easy range the brass pieces for pipes spoke their deadly message and such of the Nosu as managed to escape went away wondering as they had never wondered before. In the

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

future they were not so ready to rush on a suspicious-looking foe.

There is a good bit of the spectacular and even comical about the clan warfare of the hillmen. When they are fighting the Chinese they try to kill as many as they can, but among themselves it is usually victory with a small amount of bloodshed they strive for. Sometimes the rival forces occupy opposite hills, and then engage in a contest of reviling. Musical pipes are played at each other, and the aim of the piper is to annoy the enemy by his superior playing. The affair sometimes takes the form of a dress parade, and the side that makes the best show enjoys its superiority over the other. Whenever, in a struggle, a few have been killed, the fight is usually declared off, both parties retiring. One thinks immediately of those mediæval wars of the mercenary armies, whose campaigns were conducted with such surprisingly little loss of life.

Not long ago, when fighting against these hillmen, the Chinese pursued their old-fashioned methods of warfare, offering rewards for the heads of the enemies. Several battles were fought, in which a number of Chinese were killed. Many soldiers brought in heads to their commanders, claiming the offered reward. The commanders only too gladly paid these rewards and reported their success to headquarters. It was strange that the number of Nosu killed or captured was far less than the number of heads presented for rewards. By-and-by the truth leaked out. The Chinese soldiers had been decapitating their own wounded comrades that they might claim the reward offered by the officials leading the campaign. No wonder that as yet the Nosu hillmen do not feel very much afraid of the Chinese troops. A rude awakening, however, awaits them later on.

After we had enjoyed all the excitements of the sham fight 574 and mimic hill warfare we went home again and turned our 292 attention to something much more interesting. Ah-ku asked me if I had ever seen a lady's full state dress. I immediately took the hint and said I should be delighted if she would give us that privilege. She then proposed that she should dress up one of her daughters in full Nosu fashion. It was professedly for my benefit, but probably it was the favour of Mr Long's eye that was sought. The daughter at first demurred a little, but that was overcome. The ladies retired into the tower rooms, while we waited outside in the main room. After a while the young lady appeared in all her gorgeous attire. I wish I could do justice to the young lady. A lady's pen should describe a lady's dress. There was, of course, the usual large head-dress, which gives a stately appearance to all these fine Nosu women. Over the head-dress there was a red band, with nine golden ornaments and three golden phœnixes on it. From the band hung four strips of coloured silk, each having eleven golden ornaments on it. When the head-dress was fully in shape these four strips were looped on either side of the face, setting off the young girl's pretty countenance very finely. Over the back of the hair hung a band of black cloth, covered with silver work. At the end of it was an ornamented double dragon and sixty-one thin hangings of silver. Long coral ear-rings hung down from each ear, and these were tied in a double loop under the chin.

The long satin jacket the young girl wore was beautifully embroidered, and the whole appearance of the girl was very striking. The smoke of the wood fires had made the eyes a little sore. Otherwise the hill lassie was really a taking sight, 574 292 and she deserved the best husband that could be found for her. She was nearly as tall as her mother, but not quite so good-looking. The widow mother had managed to keep her looks in a manner remarkable for a West China woman. Most of such women look old at thirty, and very old at that age when British matrons look most handsome and stately. I hope Mr Long was duly impressed with the beautiful figure and handsome dress of Ah-tsu, the widow's pretty daughter. One fancies that if his son had been there instead of the much-married father there might have been no difficulty in the handsome widow getting a suitable husband for her daughter.

789 During the considerable interval while we were waiting for the young lady to complete her elaborate toilet we went into one of the slave's houses near by to see a wizard at work. Entering a small room, where all were seated round a wood fire, we found our old friend, the See-tieh spearman, come to assist two people from another clan who were in great trouble about something. The wizard had a big narrow drum hung on an irregular frame. He held the drum in position by a stick and string at the back, and beat it by another stick which had some goatskin bound just where the stick would strike the drum. Soon after we came in he began shouting and beating the drum, and kept this up until his particular demon seized him. Then he shook his head in a frenzied manner, tossed off his head-dress, moved his face up and down, and appeared as if he were really possessed. But I could not help thinking the man was simulating this possession. Every now and again he seemed to look at me as if wishing to notice what impression on the visitor the coming of the demon made. He seemed to want to know what was my verdict on his great performance. During the frenzy the

demon conveyed his message to the medium, and by-and-by when the man came to again, he passed this on to the people in trouble. The man went off twice like this when we were present. He was quite willing that I should examine the drum, and did not for a moment suspect that the message I longed most of all to bring to the people of his clan, as well as to all others, was a message that spelt the end of his séances. I stated just now that I could not help thinking that the man was simulating his frenzy. Possibly I may have thought wrongly. I have met a large number of mediums in West China, both aboriginal and Chinese. The aboriginal mediums seem the most popular and the most powerful. They are supposed by the people who patronise them to be the greatest experts in communing with the land of shades, where demons rule. Some of them have assured me that the possession is not simulated, that it represents a very real experience to them, and that after a while their demon is so powerful in its control over them that they can only get peace by having periodical séances, when the spirit can enter them and exert its influences.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

[Plate facing p.248]

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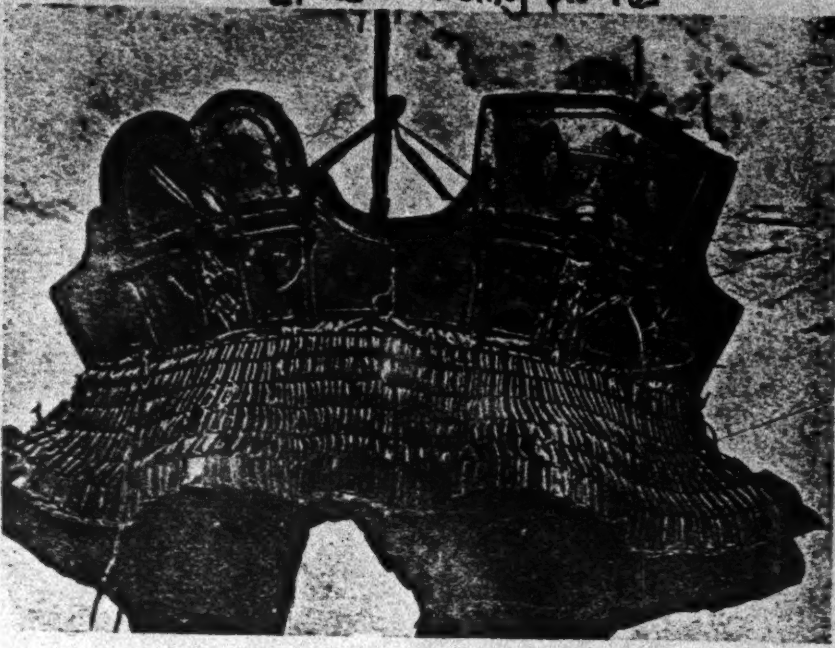
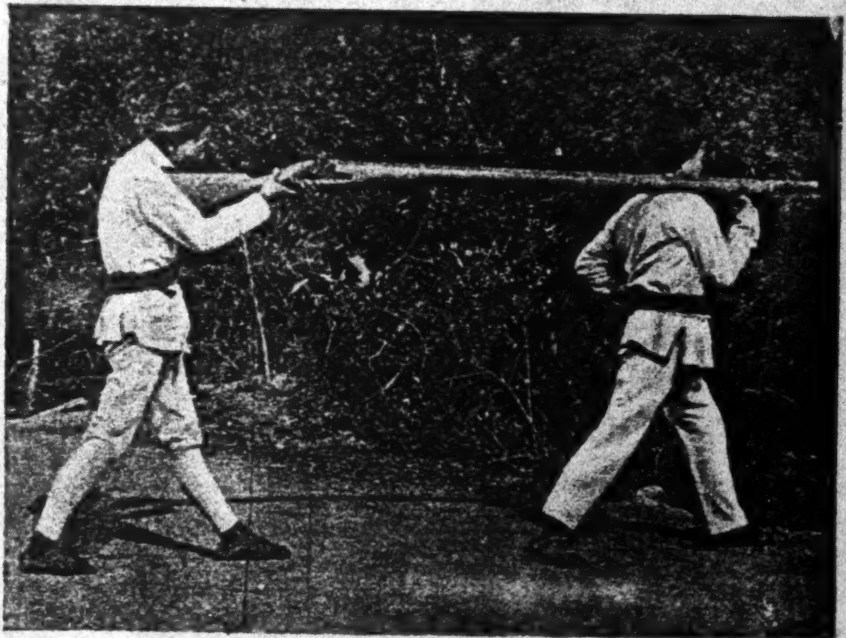


Nosu Armour made of Oxhide



A Long Nosu Gun Captured in a Raid by Chinese Soldiers

CHAPTER XXIV

IN THE GRIP OF THE DEMON

791 IN every Nosu clan and connected with every Earth Eye's household there are a number of wizards. The Nosu name for these is Pee-mo. It is very difficult to describe the exact position held by these men. They are something like the priests of the clan in that they stand between the people and the spirits of the unseen world. Yet they can hardly be termed priests in the real sense of the word, for they do not profess to commune with the Heavenly Ruler who is the most powerful of all. They do not bring the sorrows and sins of a people to one who is the arbiter of everybody's fate. They are rather a kind of borderland police who can arrest and send into banishment the spirits that dwell somewhere, where earth and Hades mingle. These spirits can do a lot of harm to the dwellers in this world, and possess something like extra-territorial rights, in that no ordinary inhabitant of this world can rule or punish them. However much they may annoy and harm people, they are outside of their control, and can only be driven away by a class of men who claim special powers to deal with such. If one were not likely to be misunderstood one might say that these Pee-mo act as a kind of diplomatic representative of the country of the spirits of darkness, and only through them can any of these spirits who commit crimes be dealt with. This illustration may seem a bizarre one to many, and yet, if you judge of these Pee-mo by their own claims, they would

791 certainly accept such an illustration as corresponding closely to their actual rank.

755 In a certain sense these men are also a kind of medicine men in that they deal with diseases of all classes and claim to cure by going to the real cause of the disease. The majority of them have nothing to do with drugs, and when one looks at the advertisement pages of Western newspapers and reads all the puffing accounts of patent drugs which one knows very well cannot possibly do always all that they claim to do, one wonders whether after all these Pee-mo are not on as high a level, or higher, than the many men who make their money by the sale of drugs which may have quick action but which certainly do not move the cause of many of the diseases which so distress mankind. In giving a wide berth to drugs and herbs, and professing to remove the initial cause of disease, these men are aiming at something which most modern medical men are aiming at. If you put germ for demon, then there is much that is similar in both Nosu Pee-mo and the modern physician. In the disregard and almost contempt for drugs which this class of men display they have strikingly anticipated the trend of the modern medical profession. But in his ascribing all disease to the influence of evil spirits who are often under the control of men like himself, he surely is very old-world in his ignorance.

189 According to these men there is the grip of the demon everywhere, and people are afraid to do many things lest their actions should provoke an outburst from some of these evil inhabitants of both worlds.

An incident we were witness of after watching the séance in the slave's home near Ah-ku's tower convinced one that the wizard believed what he preached. He was sincere in his theory of the demons. Knowing that however he may act in cases brought to him his actions are bound to provoke criticism, and even anger from some people, he thinks it very likely that these people will retaliate by invoking the god of curses to visit him and bring on him the evils this special god is supposed to control. The medium had, therefore, invited a confrère to come and avert from him the anticipated calamity. When we went to match this second ceremony the brother wizard was seated on a coarse mat, with cloak and sun hat on. A few yards in front of him was a fire of bracken burning away. The smoke of the bracken was supposed to convey the messages of the wizards to their special god. Between the first and second wizard were stuck three sharpened sticks to represent spears, and nearer still were eleven small branches of the white-wax tree. There was also a little basin of wine as an offering, and close by a small basket of chips. The wizard was holding a fowl in his hand and a sharpened stick. The two men started their chanting, and every now and again, as they came to certain places in the well-known chant of cursing. the onlookers would join in, as a kind of chorus, by shouting in Nosu : "Clear out, clear out." As they shouted the leader threw a few chips over the branches into the bracken fire. Presently, as the chanting neared the end, the fowl was killed, its blood was sprinkled on the branches and it was thrown right away. Needless to say, it was picked up and eaten later on. The usual grass effigy was made and taken away to some cross-road where people frequently pass. In this way the god of cursing is turned away, and the wizard who has helped others in their trouble himself breathes freely. I noticed that while the chanting was going on the names of all the clans and families

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around were mentioned, that curses from any quarter whatever might be counteracted and sent off at a safe tangent. 789

One wishes that among these brave but superstitious hillmen some modern medical men would set to work to relieve the suffering that abounds, and lead these people out from the distressing fear of the all-powerful demon. There is a great and happy work waiting for some medical men among the hills of the independent Nosu. 000

It is strange that the belief in spiritualism is so universal all over China, whether among the Chinese proper or among the aboriginals. One often hears about the three religions of China, but the Chinese themselves sometimes speak of the four religions, and the fourth is the most powerful of all. If Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism are religions, then spiritualism is also one of the religions of these people living in China, and it holds tremendous sway. It is practically all-powerful in Nosuland; it rules among the Nosu south of the Yangtse who have submitted to the rule of the mandarins; it is very prevalent among the other tribes, and almost every Chinese family that is not Christian believes in it. 771

An attempt has been made, after the Revolution, to put down the trade of the medium, but it has not succeeded. Outside of every town and near to every big village are houses where the mediums are at the disposal of everybody who is prepared to pay for their services. They are willing to visit the other world and find out what influence in the world of shades is working against the fortunes of the inquirer. A Delphic oracle is thus brought to every door, and there are pythonesses galore at a figure within the reach of every pocket. I have watched these mediums at their work many 000

000 a time, and have been convinced that in many cases the possession is false and made to order. But do what you will, you cannot be sure that it is always so, in fact you feel sure that there is some real phenomenon though you are not so sure that you can explain it. In the many churches which I, with others, minister to, there are several men who used to be wizards, and who only obtained release from the control and fear of the demon after they had submitted to Christ. Some of these men are eager to get all other wizards to break away from their séance trade, but they cannot always succeed. In some cases, where persuasion has not succeeded, they have tried to thwart what they consider the evil influence of these séances by getting as near to them as possible and continuing in prayer to God. Sometimes while these Christians are in another room praying the wizard entirely fails to "call spirits from the vasty deep." Why should that be? If the possession is entirely simulated such an outcome to a séance could not be. The man would be able to simulate in spite of the prayers of the Christians in another room.

At Chaotung, some years ago the daughter of the chief magistrate was taken very ill and queer. No native doctor understood her disease. At last a medium suggested that it was a spirit from the other world who wished to control the young lady, and suggested that a séance should be held, with the lady as principal. The medium's advice was carried out, regular séances were held, and the girl lost all those symptoms which were so distressing to herself and to her friends.

There is one feature about all these séances which is a mystery to me. In all the visits paid to the land of the shades the mediums describe the places they visit, and the

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spirits they meet, in the terms of every day life. I mean by that that they speak of them as they are ordinarily spoken of by the inquirers at the oracle. To the Chinaman Hades is just another world, a replica of China, a subterrestrial Celestial Empire. In the spirit world there are the same officials, the same yamens, the same underlings, the same customs, even the same marriages as one finds in this world. Wars, rumours of wars, insurrections, battles, defeats, victory, all exist in the world these mediums visit in their trances. One wonders what would become of this replica of the Manchu regime which existed in the land of Pluto when the Revolution of 1911 turned out a success.

In *The People's Paper*, a vernacular daily published at Yunnan Fu, the issue of 28th March 1912 had a most remarkable journalistic article under the heading "How Hades adopted a Republic." It described how at the end of the last year the kitchen god had gone up to heaven and reported the establishment of the United Republic in China and all its advantages. The gods met together and asked the Pearly Emperor, the highest god in the Chinese Pantheon, to start a republic. He was at first unwilling, but fearing the result of refusal might be the starting of an anarchist society, and that the fate of the Manchu Emperor might be his also, he abdicated and retired to the Western Heavens, promising no more to interfere in the government of the spirit world. The gods then elected Lao-tsz as president, who formed a Cabinet, the composition of which is most remarkable. In addition to the Cabinet there was formed a Board of Consultation, a kind of advisory board to help guide the policy of the new government. This board was composed of two Buddhas, the Goddess of Mercy, the head of the Taoist sect, and Jesus.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 This is but one instance of how Hades is considered to be merely a replica of this present world.

775 The wizards of the Miao tribes, when they visit the abodes of the dead, speak of the inhabitants there in terms of the faith of the people of their tribe. They believe that the final fate of their people is to turn into fowls in the barnyard of the Miao Pluto, who, when guests come to him, kills fowls for their entertainment. Those Miao mediums never describe Hades in Chinese terms, and I suppose no English medium in her senses would think of picturing a spirit world such as 000 the Miao or Nosu mediums see. What is the explanation of this phenomenon? Does it mean that these mediums of Eastern or Western lands have pierced the wall that separates or seems to separate this world from the next, if one may use such a phrase, or does it not rather mean that all these mediums, whether those of the Nosu hills, who are afraid of the god of cursing, or the Chinese, who are afraid of the Manchu or Republican demon officials and their underlings of Hades, or the English mediums of the Julia Bureau, or even of the Psychical Research Society, are dealing with some forces which are purely substantive, and are of no value whatever in solving the great, jealously guarded secret which deals so closely with the life that now is and with that which is eternal. My opinion is, and I give it sincerely and reverently, after acquaintance with many mediums, that the evidence for the continuity of life, for "eternal life," rests entirely in Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. The time is coming when this evidence and this alone will satisfy the whole world.

The first Protestant missionary to reside in the city of Chaotung died a short time after he settled there. To test the mediums and to prove to the people that they could not do 000 all they claimed to do, I offered a large reward to any who would call up the spirit of the dead Englishman so that he, through the medium, could hold conversation with me. This was merely what they every day claimed to do for inquirers of their own people. No one ever claimed the reward. Possibly the native mediums were nervous of the foreigner, or maybe they thought that I should never pay them even if they fulfilled my conditions.

In connection with the wizards of Nosuland there is one thing 791 that is of far more interest than all their séances or communion 212 with demons. They are the possessors of the written language and literature of Nosuland. This is a field that has been almost unexplored, and that possibly holds secrets of immense interest and value to the students of history and philology.

CHAPTER XXV

THE WRITTEN LANGUAGE AND MANUSCRIPTS

212 THE various tribes of the Nosu race are probably unique among Chinese aboriginals in that they possess a written language. Other tribes have stated that they possess books of their own, but all my efforts to obtain copies have failed.

When the late Mr Colborne Baber, in his journey through West China, found out that the Nosu had a written language of their own, and obtained specimens of their books, it was naturally looked on as an important discovery. In the years that have elapsed since that discovery not a great deal has been done to follow it up. The literature of these hill-people is still practically unexplored. It is possible that in these manuscript books there may be hidden some important facts which will cast light on early Chinese history.

A stranger who is not closely acquainted with Chinese writing might at first sight easily mistake a Nosu book for a Chinese, and yet they are absolutely dissimilar. I have found no characters in Nosu books like those in Chinese, except the numerals, and even these are not quite the same. A glance at the list of Nosu words side by side with the Chinese equivalents will at once show that the two are totally different.

Whence came those Nosu ideographs? They could not have been adapted from the Chinese, as some have erroneously supposed. If such were the case, then we are in presence of a people who must rank on a higher level intellectually 212 than the Chinese, for the Nosu ideographs are much simpler than the Chinese. I do not think that is a position anyone who has examined the question would care to take up. It 000 is true that many of the people living around China have adopted the Chinese written characters, and this fact has helped in making intercourse between different peoples feasible. On an ocean steamer you may see students from Japan, Korea and South China, who do not know a word of each other's spoken language, able to understand each other by writing Chinese ideographs. To these each man gives his own sound, which is not known by the others, but the idea conveyed by the written character is the same to each. I have been in a shop in French Tongking where there were several Annamese gentlemen present. They knew no English and I could not speak Annamese. But we managed to get on together by writing, with pencil, Chinese characters on a rough slip of paper. When we started reading what we had written we were at sea again, for each read his writing in his own way. As long as we confined ourselves to writing and looking we got on all right. It was a kind of deaf-and-dumb language to each of us, and yet each could read it to himself but not to the other. As there is a regular way of writing the different strokes in the Chinese characters, those who use them in conversation often just trace their imaginary outline on the palm of the left hand, when as a rule the looker-on can read the invisible but very real characters. What an interesting state of affairs—invisible writing for temporarily deaf-and-dumb people. The wonders of the Chinese written language have not yet been fully exhausted by Westerners, who make a kind of fetish of their romanised

000 method of writing. There are some visionaries who imagine that before long China will throw over its method of writing and adopt the romanised method. Such a change is not likely to be made in this generation or the next.

212 While the peoples around China have adopted Chinese written characters, the Nosu have kept to their own. There must have been, in ages gone by, a larger number of people who could read. Now the wizards are practically the only people who have a knowledge of the written language.

There is no such thing as an alphabet in Nosu. The same principle that rules in Chinese rules also in Nosu. Each ideograph represents an idea. The language is monosyllabic. As mentioned before, vowel sounds end the words.

214 [791] Nearly all the books are in manuscript, and are handed down from father to son. The wizards who possess the key to these books are not very eager to pass on their knowledge to others, and I have not heard that others are very anxious to share this knowledge. I have been told that there are one or two Earth Eyes who are able to read Nosu, but I have no personal acquaintance with them. One Earth Eye, who was very friendly, had wooden blocks cut for the printing of a Nosu book, and then printed off quite a number, which he gave away to any who wished for a copy. On the back of the cover was the legend :

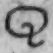
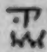
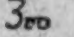
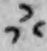
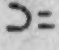
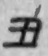
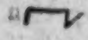
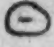
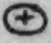
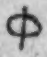
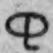
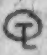
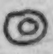
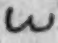
> A gift of a book to the princely man,
> With the hope that the princely man will live it out,
> If the princely man does not read the book,
> Will he kindly pass it on to someone else.

The Earth Eye was evidently imitating the Chinese, who look upon the printing and giving away of books as a very potent way of storing up merit in the bank of the other world.

Most of the Nosu manuscripts are kept by the Pee-mo in 212 their houses, not far from the wood fires. The smoke rapidly turns the colour of the bamboo paper, and soon gives it the appearance of antiquity. A comparatively recent book thus looks old, and readily deceives one who gets hold of it.

Similar to the Chinese, the Nosu writing is from top to bottom of page. It is vertical and not horizontal. Unlike the Chinese, however, it begins at the left of the page and book.

Here are a few Nosu words with Chinese equivalents:

	Hla, tongue	舌		Loo, dragon	龍
	Veeay, pig	豬		La, tiger	虎
	Du, clouds	雲		Nieh, clouds	雲
	Hm, girl	姑		Pa, father	父
	Mu, mother, female	母		Soo, person, class	族
	Chae, egg	蛋		Nioh, monkey	猴
	Ma, bamboo	竹		No, neh, or nich, black	黑
	Tsu, man	人		Loh, stone	石
	Lah, thunder	雷		Hm, heaven	天
	Hu, iron	鉄		Ntu, to beat	打
	Shi, gold	金		Lo, hand	手

Nearly all the books I have obtained have been books 538 dealing with diseases and demon possession. These books 789 form the wizard's stock in trade for the casting out of these

538 demons, and so curing disease. A page from one of these
789 books I have roughly translated as follows :—

Tsi-mu Ku-tu-tu !
Call your tiger to ride swiftly from the Sunset,
Call your tiger to attack my enemy,
Call your tiger to injure him,
Call your tiger to prevent his conception,
Call your tiger to destroy his whole offspring !
There goes the tiger to capture !
Look ! The tiger !
Don't stray aside into the dense forests !
Don't turn and wander up the steep precipices !
Look ! The tiger has got him !
Ah ! The tiger's tongue reaches my enemy !

Another manuscript deals wholly with the demon of leprosy, and is a call to the dragon god, the special god of the Pee-mo and his allies, to drive away the evil spirit which is the cause of the terrible disease. The chant describes how the animals on the hill-sides help in the search for the demon, which changes into various shapes to escape capture, but all in vain. The powerful allies of the wizard and the potency of his cursing at last lead to the capture of the spirit villain, who is forthwith cast into oblivion with a final

You snake leper demon ! You frog leper demon ! Out ! Out !

A few of us, assisted by the Society of Lepers for India and the East, are trying to do something to help the many lepers that exist and suffer among these western hills of China. I am afraid the wizards' curses and their whole army of dragon and allies will not do much to bring success to our campaign.

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773 After getting quite a number of the books which form the wizard's stock in trade, I at last got hold of one that dwelt with the origins of things. I have been told that there are

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773

other books similar to this, but I have only succeeded in getting one such book. The first five pages of the manuscript copy I have deal with the origin of the most powerful spirit, sometimes spoken of as "The Heavenly Father and Mother." Then there are four pages dealing with the beginnings of rain, snow, the sun and the moon. This is succeeded by four pages on the origin of animals, and lastly a few pages on the beginnings of man. The manuscript states that the first snow that fell on the earth was of three colours, red, yellow and white. By-and-by this coloured snow turned into twelve men. Just why the number was fixed at twelve, I do not know, though possibly there is some connection with the twelve months of the year, months, of course, being moons. Three of these men started ploughing the land, but, like many other farmers of modern times, they soon found themselves up against great difficulties. The troubles of these early agriculturists rose from the fact that God had, for some reason or other, determined to send a flood on the earth. The three ploughmen noticed that each day some young men and maidens from another world drove flocks of wild boars to root up the land that was being tilled.

After the boars had rooted up the earth the young people came along with brooms and swept everything clean. In this way it was impossible for a seed to sprout or grow. As this kind of thing continued, the three brothers resolved to try and put a stop to the work of the destroyers. The eldest brother proposed that they should catch and kill all the young people from the other world. The third brother proposed that they should cut them all in pieces. The second brother was more humane, and said: "Let us invite them all in and give them a hearty meal. Do not let us kill

538 them." The proposals of the three brothers became in some
773 way known to the sweepers of the boar-rooted-up soil, and they determined to reward the second brother for his kindness of heart. They sent word to him that God did not wish the soil tilled, as He was going to send a flood on the earth. As he had been kind to them, they would tell him how to save himself when the day of the great flood came. Their advice was to take wood and make a large cupboard in which he could sleep at night. The second brother followed this advice, and those who gave it returned home. Twelve days after this the flood came. The second brother floated out on his cupboard boat and saved the lives of a lot of different creatures. Among others, he saved the snake, the bee and the crow. The first brother, meanwhile, had got into an iron box and was drowned. When the floods abated, "Number Two" was left alone. By-and-by he got tired of this loneliness, and wished for a wife. The only place where there were any women to be had was where God was living. The lonely man would have liked to have spoken for one of the divine daughters, but he had no one to present his request for him. This old-world tale is written from an Oriental standpoint, and therefore all marriages need to be arranged by some go-between. The snake, seeing the difficulty the man was in, offered to speak for him, in return for the kindness the man had showed him at the time of the flood. But the snake was also confronted with a difficulty, for he was unable to travel as far as the house where the father of the daughter lived. The man overcame this difficulty by carrying the snake around his neck, and in this way they came to God's house. During the night the snake set to work to help his friend, and did so by biting

one of the daughters of the household. The young girl was 538
in great trouble, and there was no one to cure her. The man 773
in quest of a wife then came forward, and offered his services on condition, if successful, that he might have the daughter as his wife. The distressed father agreed. The girl was cured of her snake-bite, and the man wished for the completion of the bargain, but in this, as in many similar cases, the father refused to keep his word. The man went away disappointed. Later on he resolved to try again, and had as companion on this visit the bee. The bee imitated the snake, and stung the girl in her face. There was the same proposal by the man, on the same terms, which were accepted. This time, after the cure, the man was allowed to take the girl away with him as his wife. The father resolved to do his best for the young couple, and on their departure gave them supplies of all the seeds they needed. There was, however, one seed he did not give them, and that was the hemp seed. This old-world Nosu Eve got out of this difficulty by going back home and stealing the seed which had been withheld from them. One wishes he knew the origin of such an interesting story. The adventurous wife stealing the forbidden seed makes a picture very much like another story with which we are more familiar. And yet some people persist in saying that the East and the West are for ever separated. When it comes to questions concerning Eve and her adventures, ancient or modern, there is not much difference, but a great family likeness.

Whether there will be any permanent value in these Nosu 000
manuscripts one cannot yet say. It would be a great discovery if some of these were found to refer to early Chinese history, or to the times when the Chinese first came in

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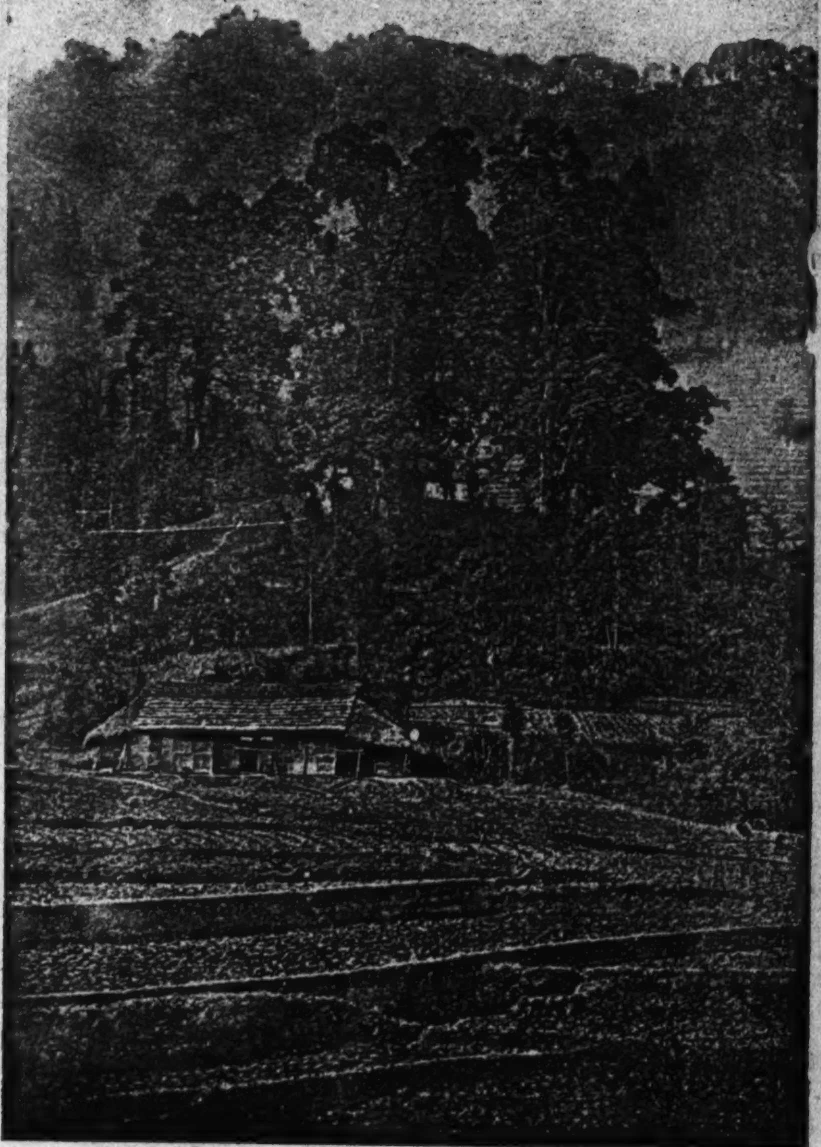

BUILDINGS ROOFED WITH THE BARK OF THE PINE-TREE, WHICH LAST TEN OR MORE YEARS

[Plate facing p. 264]

000 contact with these Nosu people. At that time the Nosu must have spread over a very vast area, and were probably the predecessors of the Chinese in much of what is now the Republic of China. The accounts of Chinese early history are practically found only in Chinese records. If some independent account could be discovered, which would throw light, from a non-Chinese standpoint, on some of the problems of the early history of this great country, it would indeed be welcome to all students of history.

797
191 The number of foreigners who have studied any branch of the Nosu language is very small indeed. The Roman Catholics have had a flourishing mission work among the Gni, a branch of the Nosu race, and Père Vial, who has for many years been the head of this mission, has given to the world
101 some account of this people and their language. There is, however, one serious criticism to make of Père Vial's writings. He persists in calling these people Lolo. This is, indeed, the name by which this race is known to most Westerners and Chinese. One ought always to be a bit suspicious of adopting any name for an aboriginal tribe which has been given to it by the Chinese, who are always so contemptuous of these peoples. As far as I have noticed, you can scarcely insult a member of the Nosu race more than by calling him a Lolo. These people deeply resent this term. At the use of it some of these aboriginals will flare up and get into a terrible rage. I have seen some men at such times almost or quite angry enough to commit murder. The ideographs which the Chinese use for the word Lolo are usually written with a "dog radical at the side," thus in a concise way expressing to all who can read the supreme contempt in which the Nosu are held. The

101 Chinese word for the tiny basket in which the Nosu ancestral spirits are supposed to reside is also pronounced Lolo, and often, when the word is used, the hillmen imagine that their forefathers are being insulted. In view of their deep aversion to this term, it is courteous for those who also have suffered abuse from the Chinese to drop the use of it. The name which the people prefer should rather be adopted. No-su or Ne-su may not be such a euphonious term as Lolo, but it conveys no sting, and is not an insult to a brave race, who have kept up their end of the wicket for so many centuries.

The first character of the word No-su is at times pronounced No, Ne or even Nieh, and its meaning is Black. The second character means race, people, class, etc. In some connections the word No means north, and here one may have the solution of the origin of the term which the tribes so resent. The north wind is the wind that comes from the No. It is possible that these aboriginals had their home, in the very early days, in the same district where the north wind came from, the No district. As the tribes were pressed farther and farther south, they would speak of themselves as a people coming from the No direction, the No race, the No-su, the No-no people.

Among the different dialects of China there exists a kind of Oriental Grimm's law, which turns certain consonants in one part into different consonants in other parts. N and L are two consonants which are thus exchanged. F and H are others. The province of Hu-nan, for instance, in Szechuan, is spoken of as the province of Fu-lan. In the same way it may have happened that the aboriginals from the north, the No-no men, became, to the people of Szechuan, by the

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

101 application of the above law, the Lo-lo men. If so, in the original meaning of the word there was no slur. This is the most plausible explanation I can think of in reference to the origin of the term so bitterly resented by many of my friends and their fellow-tribesmen. I therefore do all I can to discourage the use of the word, knowing how it feels to be called by an opprobrious term, in which the clever Chinese has hidden the supreme contempt in which he holds men who are not of his exalted race.

CHAPTER XXVI

BACK INTO THE DANGER ZONE

ONE evening while we were staying at the friendly 574 widow's home the weather cleared up beautifully, and the moon shone out in all its full glory. This tempted everybody away from the dark room and the fire, and we all adjourned to the courtyard, from which could be seen the snow hills, with their white sides shining in the clear moonlight.

The young people started a wrestling match, Nosuland *v.* 574 Yunnan. Each person going to take part in the contest 526 tied a girdle around his waist. The antagonists, bending down, caught hold of each other's girdles and manœuvred until one or other got a fair throw on to the back. The men who had come across from Yunnan were no match for the Nosu. The fun was very exciting, and the young men entered into it heartily. The Yunnan men did not take their beating very gracefully. Then hopping and skipping were tried, and, being raw at these, the Nosu were nowhere. Then one of the Yunnan men, wishing to recover the ashes, proposed a trial at fist-striking. Each held out a fist, and in turns the pair of combatants struck each other's fist. Here the Yunnan man held his own, and at last, before his heavy blows, the Nosu champion winced and interposed his hide arm-protector. This was held equivalent to defeat, and now it was the hillmen who were not pleased at the turn of affairs. I think they would like to have gone a step

574 farther, for they are always on the look out for a fight. In
526 fact, the whole race of Nosu in this independent land seem a race of born fighters. The sight of a gun will set them all in a quiver of excitement. They closely examine it, pass it from one to another, and then want to fire it off. They do not see why you should possess fine guns if you do not intend to use them. In that they are like many present-day Europeans.

574 While the young men were engaged at their sports, the stars shone down on us beautifully. The house faced the west. Jupiter was in his full glory, and away to the north the Great Bear was faithfully keeping watch over this land where bears are so common. By-and-by the sports came to an end, and we went into the house again and to bed. We were due to rise early the next morn, as we had an important stage to do and we wanted to start before it became late.

We rose up at cock-crow, long before it was daylight. We were all excited, for this day we were going down to the Yangtse again, and were to run the risk of a struggle with the Lai-lai and Sha-ma clans. When we first got up the skies were still clear, and Venus in the east was shining very brilliantly. This brightness, however, did not last long, and before we started on our journey, mist reigned supreme on all sides. One of the women brought in a supply of large buckwheat cakes for our use on the road. These cakes were one and a half inches thick, and I got half of one as my share for the day. The cakes of some of the others were more than three inches thick. There was in these cakes a real solid breakfast and dinner for us all.

After the sharing out of the cakes we said good-bye to all

the folk in the friendly widow's home. We had been very 574
kindly treated, and were not likely to forget Ah-ku's house on the spur of the hill in Nosuland. We now started on our long journey down to the Yangtse. The first part of the road was simply abominable. It was right by the side of a steep ravine. I was wearing a pair of hemp sandals I had 437
purchased for two and a half pounds of salt, and these, being new, were rather slippery on the rough road. I hardly knew 000
how I managed to get down that bit of horrible road in safety. It was decidedly the worst bit of road we had travelled over in Nosuland. Undoubtedly you have to go to a good bit of trouble to get into that fascinating land, and when you are in it it is not easy to get out again. In fear and trembling I followed the others down the ravine road, my way made no easier by the fact that my new Nosu sandals, of which I was so proud, were gradually rubbing their way through the skin of my feet. As we were painfully going down, a place was pointed out to us where, in 1900, an enormous bear was shot. It fell over the cliff, but was recovered by the hunters. The fat alone from its body made a good load for four men to carry with them. This is said to be the largest bear ever bagged in the district. Entangling creepers stretching across the road, hindered our way considerably. Sometimes we had to climb around cliffs, or up the single trunk of a tree. To men who have travelled in the Alps, or among the virgin forests of Brazil, these descriptions may seem tame and laboured. It must be remembered that we were only prepared for ordinary West China roads, and to us who have been used to such roads these rough cliff roads of Nosuland were very trying and difficult. We came to the conclusion that there were no

000 roads here for soldiers with their equipment to travel over. Of course, if the Chinese Government were ever in real earnest, they could gradually make roads, as they have done in their great expeditions to Tibet. There is nothing in the way of country which will stop Chinese when they are determined to succeed. The men that have, at one time or another, overrun and conquered the whole of Asia, have yet some surprises in store for the rest of the world.

499 When we had reached the bottom of this ravine road we came to another ravine, in which, at a considerable depth, there roared a great torrent. Where this second ravine was narrowest, four or five thick sticks had been tied together, and over these we had to go. Several went down
000 on their hands and knees, and so got across. It was again interesting to note that men who will ride fearlessly almost anywhere are very afraid to trust their own legs in dangerous places. When you have got to know what wonderful animals these little West China horses are, you get to trust them in most dangerous places. I have seen men riding down risky places, with reins thrown over the neck of the horse, and the latest newspaper from home in their hands. A slip and they were gone, never to ride over these hills again, and yet so confident has the rider been of his little horse that he reads the reports of the stirring debates on Home Rule without a thought to the sudden death just a few inches away. I have been one of two such men when we have argued over the old ground with no result except intense interest on either side. And all the time the little horses were carefully and surely working their way to the foot of the hill where there is safety and a wider road.

The raging waters, under the very rustic bridge we crossed over, looked very grand. On the other side there were some 000 rocks which were very difficult to negotiate. There was scarcely a trace of a road anywhere, and had there not been trusty guides with us, who knew the way well, we should have been unable to find our way. Our men were in a lively mood as we travelled along. They were hooting and shouting and giving their war-whoops as if they scented a fray not far off. The people living on the other side of the valley really thought we were a band of raiders on the warpath, and some actually ran away from the anticipated danger.

We crossed now into the lands of another clan, the Ah-liu, 484 and stayed a short time at a village where the chief's residence was. A number of people came out to see us and to ask a lot of questions. Some asked if Mr Long and the others followed the foreigner because of fear, or from some other reason. Mr Long replied that he followed the foreigner because he was such a wonderful man that he could go anywhere, even to heaven. Our men were in the mood for getting fun out of anything.

We were now approaching the danger zone, concerning which we had received warning on two or three occasions. In view of the possible kidnapping, a number of armed men had joined us. Others again, with loads of mountain herbs, [439] which they were going to sell to Chinese from south of the river, came into our party that they might take advantage of our escort. Shouts from a distant hill told us that our See-tieh friends were not failing us. Vri-ntee and his brother were bringing up their forces, determined to see their adopted brother, Nhe-jah-jah, safely through the dangerous district into Chinese territory. By the time we reached the top of the second hill we were quite a formidable band, and there were

484 with us some were redoubtable fighters. Our old friend, the spearman, was among the number, determined that if there was any fun he would have his share of it.

On the top of the hill we came to what seemed at that time a very curious sight, a Chinese grave. Such a sight, all too common in China proper, seemed all out of place in Nosuland, and I stopped to take note of it. The inscription on the stone showed that it was the grave of a woman, a Mrs Hwang, with maiden name of Liu. The stone had been erected in the reign of the Emperor Tao-kwang. One would like to have known the history of this solitary woman, buried away from her kin, in the land of strangers. Possibly her husband had been one of a band of miners, who had risked much to extract the so-called riches from the hills of Nosuland. A little farther on we came to a splendid spring, where are the remains of a building which was probably a temple erected by the miners to the dragon god. All traces of any mining had long passed away and the adventurous men were nowhere in evidence.

Our large party rested by the side of the spring and had an alfresco breakfast. The hill was covered with very long grass, and a great band of men could have been hidden there without its being known. The spot has an evil reputation for robberies.

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264 There were in our band four horses ~~which had~~ been brought across by the See-tieh men, and there were some scores of armed men. Guns and spears were laid aside for a while, and breakfast commenced. Sheepskin bags were opened. Brass basins, wooden spoons and bamboo chop-sticks were brought out. Oatmeal was served all round, and the cool water helped it down splendidly. There was a bit of romance

about this part of the meal, for we were taking the rations 484
usually given to fighting men when out for a raid. After this 264
first course was finished we started on the huge cakes of buckwheat. Those were helped down with slices of cold pork the friendly widow had provided us with. The cakes and pork were cut up on the stones with the warriors' swords. The cakes and pork were very savoury, and the sword-cutting made them all the more tasty and decidedly out of the common. Some time after this I was travelling in a district where the officials thought there might be danger to a foreigner, and so they sent a couple of soldiers with me. They were armed with modern rifles, and in their belts carried daggers as well. Both of the soldiers were able to cook, and one night, when a couple of fine fowls were killed for our supper, the soldiers asked if they might prepare the evening meal for us. They set to work in earnest, cleaned the fowls well, and then cut them into small pieces with their daggers. We enjoyed our
supper that night. The next day, while walking along 484
together, the two soldiers told us about the rebellion that had taken place in that district not long ago, and which they had taken a share in putting down. They described how after the rebels had been defeated, and several of them killed, the soldiers, in accordance with a custom which is fairly common in some parts, had taken out the hearts, etc., of the dead men, and had eaten them. I asked how they had done this, and pointing to their daggers they said it was with these that they had operated on the dead rebels. The very same dagger which had cut up the rebels' hearts for a cannibal feast had also cut up the fowls we had enjoyed so much the night before. Had there been such a complete change in the state of affairs as there was in the year of the Boxer rising, these

484 men would not have hesitated to have tried their daggers on us, and to have sampled the hearts of the foreigners they were talking to now in such a confidential, friendly way. A strange, unfathomable man is the Chinaman. Yet we travelled along with these soldiers like good comrades, enjoying each other's company, and never dreaming that any change could come over our friendly relations.

757 Whenever you saw those Nosu hillmen eating their huge pieces of meat you could not help admiring the splendid teeth they had. Now and again we came across a man whose teeth had pained him and who had had some of them extracted. There are not many, however, who have gone through an operation of that kind, and when it was described to me I did not wonder at that. This operation in Nosu dentistry is performed in the following manner. A strong piece of bamboo about six inches in length is procured. This piece of bamboo is held in the left fist firmly and the end is placed against the tooth that is wished to be extracted. When all is ready a big blow is struck at the end of the bamboo, and if the blow is skilfully delivered the tooth is knocked out. One wonders where it is knocked to, and how much of the jaw goes with it. I asked what happened if the blow were clumsily delivered. The answer was: "Eat bitterness." The patient would certainly eat bitterness. I wondered what share of this bitterness would fall to the lot of the dentist. How we all sympathise when we hear stories of teeth being extracted, especially if we can go back to the days before modern dentistry reached its present state of efficiency. I remember that one of my earliest experiences in this line was when I was away at school. The dentist who extracted teeth for all the boys, and any people in the village near by, was

the blacksmith, a sturdy, fine, good-natured Devonian. He, 757
however, could shoe a horse better than he could draw a tooth. I wanted two extracted. The first troubler of Israel came out all right. The second did not. So the friendly blacksmith charged only for one, sixpence instead of a shilling.

The pluckiest person for having teeth extracted whom I 757
have ever come across was an aboriginal woman living 152
among these West China hills. She came to me one Sunday, begging me to help her out of her trouble by pulling some of her teeth. I got her to open her mouth and tell me which she wished extracted. She replied to my inquiry by saying: "The one at the back, teacher, all of them." I started with number one at the back, and it came out cleanly. The old lady did not wince nor cry. She merely said: "That is splendid. It makes you feel comfortable. Now the next, teacher." Out came number two. No wincing; no crying; just the remark: "That is splendid. It makes you feel comfortable." The same after number three came out, and also the same after number four was extracted. When number five came out the dear, brave old soul, with her mouth covered with blood, said: "Thank you, teacher. It does not hurt a bit, and it does make one feel comfortable." She opened her mouth for still another, but I backed out. I was jolly uncomfortable if the old lady was not. When I remembered how I had shaken and trembled when I visited a certain room in Finsbury Pavement, London, I realised what a great amount of pluck this hillwoman had.

Talking about the teeth has made one, as it always does, 000
forget everything else. We must return to the spring by the hill-side where we were eating the buckwheat cakes and the sword-cut pork.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 Looking through the telescope, we could see the rapids of Shin Chan Keo, and the little market town in all the busy rush of market day. We began to hurry on, hoping that we might get across the roaring Yangtse before the market was scattered. As we were going, so we hoped, to stay the night at the little town, we wanted to be in time to purchase a few things for our supper. We had no friendly widows or brothers of girls with coral ear-rings, or even drunken Ah-poohs waiting to give us a welcome and the best of their hospitality. We were getting back into China, where you usually pay for all you get, and get paid for as little of what you give as the other man can make it possible. The welcome the ferry people were preparing for us was quite in keeping with the character of Mr Tien. the head-man at the ferry town. We had won our first games, but we had not yet won the rubber. There was still a chance that the rubber might be won by the man who had pitted himself against our party and was determined to come off best if he possibly could.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE PLOT THAT FAILED

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WHILE we were enjoying ourselves wandernig through Nosuland, lifting the veil that had hidden the people of that remarkable district from the knowledge of the civilised world, we had almost forgotten China proper, and all the people who lived there. We remembered how the Defender of the Yangtse and those under his control had attempted to block us, but having got right away from their direct influence we had felt that we need not worry ourselves much about them. It was almost "Out of sight, out of mind." We found out, however, that if we were willing to forget them they were quiet unwilling to treat us in the same way. The fact that the adventurous foreigner had actually eluded all their vigilance and balked all their plots, and had actually gone into the land which they had so jealously guarded for so long, annoyed them very much. In their stupidity or wisdom they were dreaming that the missionary foreigner was already concluding an alliance with the hillmen which would be to the detriment of China and themselves. This outcome of affairs was a pill to some of these fussy people which they were not very willing to swallow.

I have mentioned how the spy was sent after us to See-tieh, and how when he got there he checkmated our plans by making Ah-pooh drunk, so preventing us from getting information we very much wished to get. This same spy

000 turned up again at the ferry the day that we recrossed the river. With our return his work was completed. If he told all that he knew about our journey, I do not think he could have told much to our harm. Possibly he never told his friends how that slave woman refused him free drinks of cold water and made him look very small before the others. He was not likely to boast about a member, a male member of the ruling race who had been successfully defied by a woman of the despised race.

628 In addition to sending this man to dog our footsteps other messengers were sent to Nosu in another direction. East of the district where we had spent such a happy time live two powerful tribes, the Lai-lai and the Sha-ma, who for long had been at enmity with the four tribes who had become so unfriendly with me. These two parties were constantly watching each other, and looking out for opportunities for the payment of old grudges. Do whatever they could, the score between them never got even, and apparently there was no prospect except that of perpetual enmity. The law of revenge among the Nosu being what it is, one sees no way out of the clan feuds except by the introduction of an outside influence which has never been entangled in their clan quarrels. Some time after the tragic death of the chief, Vri-ntee, the Nhe clan determined that the time had come to carry out their long-intended attack on their old enemies, the Sha-ma. The Nhe men bought over the help of a number of Chinese, and made their preparations with great thoroughness. A large band of Nosu were gathered together, eager to revenge the deeds of long ago. The idea of forgiving what has been done in the past never seems to enter the heads of the Nosu. The avenging bands set out on their mission of revenge, and

soon were across the river that lies between the lands of the two opposing parties. With the help of their allies the Nhe got the better in the fight and chased their enemies before them. Over thirty of the Sha-ma men took refuge in a tower, where they were surrounded by an enemy bent on giving no mercy. The Nhe men managed to set the lowest stage of the tower on fire, and seeing their danger some of the inmates rushed out and tried to fight their way through. Most of them were cut down. Finding the lower story on fire, the men who remained in the tower fled to the second story, and fought from there as best they could. Out of this they were again driven by the pitiless flames, which while friendly to a dead Nosu are merciless to a living one. At last the little band had nothing to stand on, and clung to the beams of the roof. Hanging here, the fires gradually reached them, and one by one they had to let go and be devoured in the magnificent but cruel funeral pyre their enemies had prepared for them. There was one man that managed to escape by a tremendous jump. When the fire reached the second floor he realised there was no escape to those who remained on, and resolved to jump for it. Climbing up to a low window, he stooped and gave a great jump which not only cleared the surrounding wall but the narrow moat outside. He landed among his enemies, who all set on him. With such desperation did he lay about him that he fought his way successfully through and escaped. The Nhe men marvelled at the man's powers, and it is they who will never forget how one man at any rate escaped from the burning tower. In this murderous raid of revenge the Nhe men killed over seventy strong men of their enemies. The deaths of these seventy, of course, more than wipes out the balance on the other side, and now

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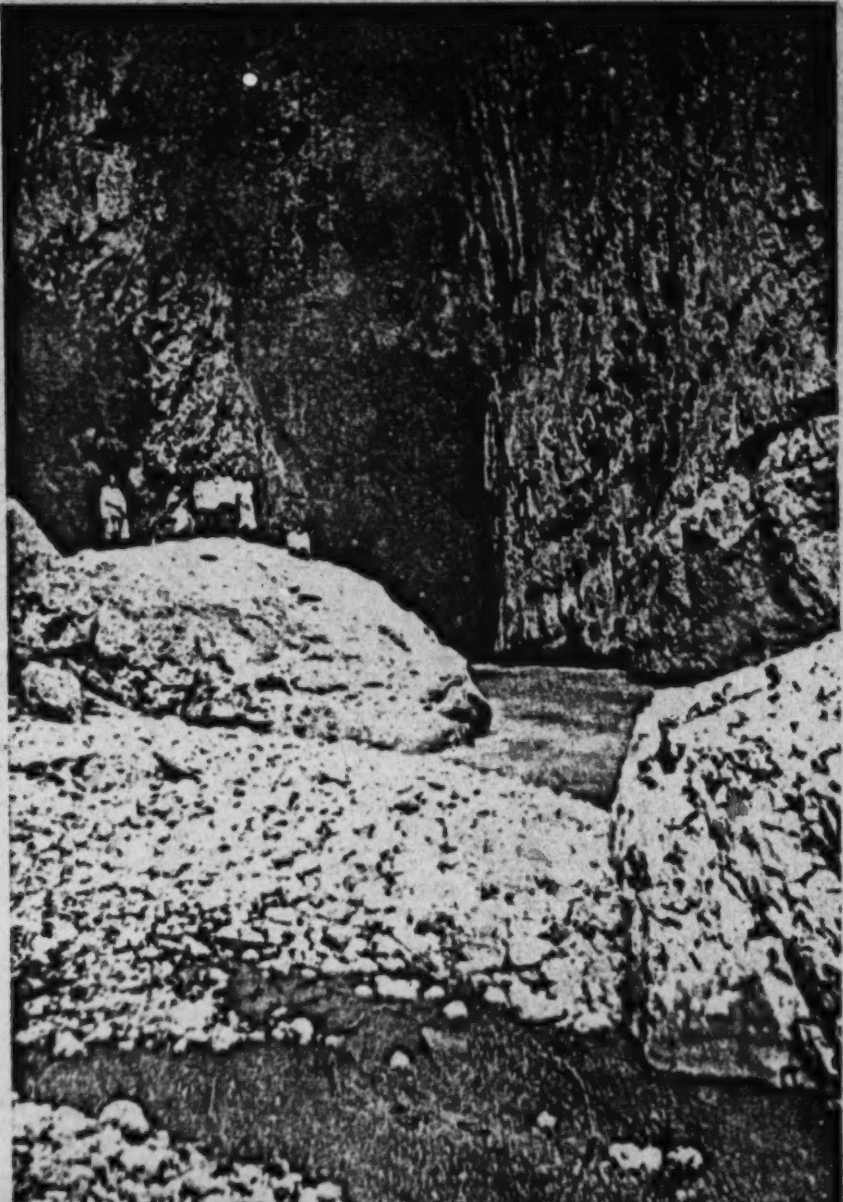

An Underground River

[Plate facing p. 280]

628 the Sha-ma clan will wait until they are strong enough to pay back their hereditary foes. So the sad, stupid story goes on.

000 Mr Tien, the head-man of the ferry town, resolved to make use of this clan hatred to further his schemes against us. It may be wondered why he did not finish us off directly and so save further trouble. It must be remembered, however, that the Chinese do not particularly like to do things directly if they can do them in a roundabout way. A man proposes to a lady through another man. China tries to beat back the powerful forces of Russia by intriguing and setting Russia and Japan against each other. The whole actions of Mr Tien were characteristically Chinese. He remembered that the Chinese had to pay a terrible price for having allowed the direct tactics of the Boxers. He knew also that even the powerful secret society palaces have failed to protect a man when justice is demanded for the murder of a European. He, like many others, preferred to work in a vicarious manner with the uncanny foreigner, blows against whom act in a boomerang fashion and recoil on the hitter. Superstition also plays a part in these matters. Another name for the "palaces" of the brotherhood is "river mouths." Long ago some wise member of the brotherhood uttered a prophetic epigram which may have restrained attacks on foreigners many times. He said: "When the ocean dies the river will be destroyed." The word ocean is taken as meaning "ocean men," the frequent term used for foreigners. The river, of course, refers to the secret societies. A brotherhood man who remembers this prophetic phrase does not, therefore, usually seek the direct death of a foreigner, lest it may result in the destruction of his palace or river mouth. But

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4
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he has many other ways in which he can do dire mischief to the so-called men of the ocean.

Mr Tien, therefore, sent agents across to the Lai-lai and Sha-ma clans, and did his best to stir them up to attack the foreigner and party who had been received so kindly by their enemies. He tried to work on their cupidity by describing the immense wealth of Mr Long and the Englishman. He was right in regard to my friend, for Mr Long is the owner of many thousands of acres of fine land, in fact of estates that would rank him among the aristocracy were his land in England. But the wealth of the foreigner was grossly exaggerated. A missionary of one of the smaller Methodist bodies does not usually possess a fortune. I know that I did not, though I have often wished that I did. I have even planned and schemed as to what I should do if a thousand pounds were given me for my work, but all these plannings are but dreams, day-dreams, so far. I did once have a million of money given me by my native friends for one year's work, and so for the time was a kind of a millionaire missionary with full coffers. But the money was copper cash, at about fifty to the penny, and the money came from the poorest of the poor. My adventures as a millionaire, though they were deeply interesting, did not take me very far.

These facts about the fortune of the foreign traveller among the Nosu were not known to the seekers after wealth, the Lai-lai and the Sha-ma. They, however, believed the stories of Mr Tien, and thought that if they possessed themselves of our two persons they would be able to demand a good ransom. They thought that the ransom would be forthcoming when we got to understand the alternatives which awaited us if we did not pay up. When the Nosu in their own land wish to

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

628 When the Nosu in their own land

extract a ransom from a captive they have many kinds of torture which they apply. One is to tie up the captive and then, in his presence, kill a sheep or an ox. The kidneys and the intestines are then soaked in boiling water. The burning hot kidneys are then placed in the armpits of the captive and the intestines are tied around his chest to keep the kidneys in position. Another method is to tie new palm ropes all about the body as tightly as possible. Then cold water is thrown over the ropes. This makes them contract and eat into the flesh. Another favourite plan of the Nosu is to drive a large stake into the ground with the top split a little. The victim's two thumbs are then tied by thin cord to the sides of the top of the stake. A wedge is then driven into the split at the top, and the agony endured is terrible. I arrived on the scene once when an Earth Eye was treating one of his tenants in this way. Strange to say, it was the wife of the Earth Eye who drove the wedge in with repeated blows. The Earth Eye invited our party to stay and have supper with him, but we did not accept the invitation.

With such weapons in their armoury the chiefs of the two clans felt sure that if they could once capture us they would make sure of the ransom. If they only succeeded in their plans the gates of El Dorado would open to them at last.

000 Mr Tien knew that we were going to return by the same ferry. His spies had kept him well posted in all the news. He arranged, therefore, with the conspirators of the hostile clans, that the ferry-boat should be delayed on the day of our arrival so that as it got on towards dusk these hill raiders could rush out from their hiding-place and capture the two men, each of whom was reported to be worth a ransom of

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ten thousand ounces of silver. In this way they concluded that no blame could be fixed for our capture on the people of the ferry town. It would be represented that it was merely an accident that the ferry had been delayed, and that the raids of the hillmen are always unexpected and outside the control of the Defender of the Yangtse. Possibly when the hue and cry was raised some shots would have been fired by the Chinese on the south side of the river, so as nominally to frighten off the raiders. If the heavy ransom demanded was not forthcoming, and the two captives in the end were killed, no blame could be attached to the hidden engineers of the coup, and even the " river mouth " palaces would be clear, as the brotherhood would not be the direct authors of the death of the ocean man.

But the best-laid schemes of men often go awry. Miscarriage of such schemes is so frequent that it almost becomes a rule. Many centuries ago, during the troubled romantic times which gave rise to the *Story of the Three Kingdoms*, the novel referred to in Chapter VI., the famous philosopher and strategist who is the real hero of the book uttered on one occasion the pregnant words: " Scheming belongs to man, carrying out belongs to Heaven," an almost exact parallel of " Man proposes but God disposes." Scheming belonged to Mr Tien and his allies. They made sure that they would succeed and that no foreigner would again attempt to cross the Yangtse against their will. But they also again reckoned without their host, and forgot the sage dictum of the great hero of the story of the first brotherhood.

The Lai-lai and Sha-ma laid their plans, and on the day we climbed down towards the ferry they prepared to carry them out. They gathered their bands together and had their

OOO rendezvous in a cave which overlooked the ferry. Scouts were sent to find out the strength of our party. These were evidently a bit disconcerted at the number of men composing our band. Then, in addition, the stories of the thousand-li gun, and the terrible camera which the man from the sunset carried, had reached these would-be kidnappers. At close quarters the sudden swoop did not look so easy. Hesitation soon began to show itself in the ranks of the conspirators.

Meanwhile we were climbing our way down the steep hill towards the ferry, and were expecting before long to be out of Nosuland. As we worked our way down I wondered how the carriers of the huge coffin boards managed to get their burdens safely over such a rough road. Later on, when going up the other side towards Chaotung, I wondered still more how they managed to carry their death boxes up such tremendous hills, and all for such little pay. The burden-bearers of West China do indeed know the bitterness of life. In this the women take a part. I have frequently seen women carrying loads of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred and twenty pounds up steep hills that made one tired even when walking empty-handed. Yunnan has always been looked upon by Chinese officials as a province of poverty. One official from Peking kept a diary of his experiences in Yunnan. In this diary he refers to the heavy burdens borne by the women. He tells of one woman carrying a heavy load of coal on one of the hilly roads, and says that one day she put her load down by the roadside for a while. After a not very long delay she reappeared and took up her burden again. This time she had an extra burden in the shape of a new-born baby, whose advent into the world had delayed her

for a short time on her heavy burden-bearing journey. The 000
official instanced this as showing what a strong race the Yunnan people are. He does not know the awful price that poor woman would have to pay in later years for her terrible experience.

Before we reached the water's edge we began to shout across to the other side, giving the captain of the ferry warning that our party would soon be wanting to be taken across to the Yunnan shores. We hoped that he would hear our shouts and be on the Nosu side to meet us as soon as we had finished our long climb down. Most Chinese ferrymen, expecting a good tip, would have done this readily. But as we neared the Yangtse waters we saw no signs of any response to our shouts. The boat was still tied up securely to the Yunnan bank, and there was no move whatever on the part of the ferry captain. This procedure considerably disconcerted us. At first we did not see through the plot, and were merely annoyed at the delay. Our escort wished to see us safely over the river and then were going to return up that hill past the danger zone that same night. We were anxious not to delay them unduly. It was very kind of them to come so far with us and we did not wish to trespass on their kindness any more.

The first hour passed fairly pleasantly, thinking that every ten minutes would see the captain hurrying along from the market town. After the first hour was over, and still there was no sign of the boatman, our men lost their temper and began roundly cursing all the ten thousand generations that had led up to the birth of the captain who refused to appear.
I have usually found that the aboriginals, when they start 177
swearing, do so in Chinese. Their own words have entirely 192
failed by the side of the Chinese epithets, which express with a 195

177 refined force or blunt coarseness the most terrible or horrible
192 curses a person in his wildest passion would wish to give
195 utterance to. A knowledge of the swear words of the
000 Chinese gives one an open window into their real thoughts and wishes. It is often said in extenuation that the Chinese use these terrible, filthy oaths without thought or understanding of their import. Such is not the case, for when two men or women really warm up to the fray it is like a closely fought game of chess when each antagonist meets the move of the other with a careful counter move of his own. They understand all too well what they say, and thrust and parry with the skill of practised gladiators.

We were kept waiting four hours at the ferry, unable to cross over the hundred yards that separated us from the safety of China proper.

Near by where we were waiting was a shingle beach, at the junction of a small stream with the Yangtse. Several of us went down to this beach, and, to while the time away, began throwing stones. This led on to talk about the stories that had gone abroad concerning the foreigner's prowess in stone-catching. Several of the party tried me again. Once more most of the stones proved quite easy of catch, for the men were too polite to pelt me in dead earnest. While we were enjoying the fun and killing the tedium of waiting for the immovable ferry, the men in the cave were watching, and from what they saw they came to the conclusion that the uncanny foreigner, whom rumour said a hundred men could not hit, had better be left alone. The simple fun of stone-throwing and stone-catching set alight the fires of the raiders' superstitions, and the signal was given that we were too strong to be attacked. True it is that fears as well as

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conscience make cowards of us all. Of course we were at the time unaware of all that was going on with the Lai-lai and Sha-ma, but the full story came out later on, and I received a very friendly invitation to go and visit the Sha-ma tribe, who had been nearly swindled into making an attack on a foreigner who had never done them any harm and only wished them well.

The stone-throwing was the simple move that once more checkmated Mr Tien. Sometimes the moving of even a pawn will help in winning a game. After the stone-throwing the keeping back of the ferry-boat was useless. Once the superstitious fears of the Lai-lai and Sha-ma had been aroused, the ferry-boat might have delayed all night without these clansmen attempting to capture us. Beaten again, Mr Tien! We win the rubber!

We fired off our guns to attract attention. Our men woke up now and again, and once more attacked the ancestors of the captain and all the crew. At last, just at dark, the four hours of weary waiting came to an end and the captain appeared. The boat once more came across to Nosu shores. When we were all safely across we said good-bye for a time to Nosuland, whose people had been so courteous and kind to the stranger who had come among them. The captain of the boat was in a very bad temper and he also swore soundly at our men as they came on board. His plans had miscarried and he was not at all pleased.

CHAPTER XXVIII

UP THE HILLS AND HOME AGAIN

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AT last we were safely over the Yangtse and said farewell to the ferry-boat that had caused us such a lot of trouble and had drawn out such a lot of picturesque language from both those who had been delayed and those who had delayed. The last time I went in that direction, only a month or two ago, there was no ferry-boat at Shin Chan Keo, and the captain was dead. A short time previously he had taken the boat across to the Nosu side to ferry over a number of aboriginals and Chinese who had been among the hills in connection with opium planting or purchasing. The boat was crowded, and the opium being brought across was a valuable cargo. The men were expecting to sell out to the Chinese south of the river, where the Government campaign against opium was in full swing, forcing up prices to a very high figure. The boat was pushed off; the two men at the oars began to row hard so as to cross before the boat was swept down too near the terrible rapids. The captain was in charge of the long-oar rudder, and was giving his orders in his usual terse, picturesque way, when suddenly there was an ominous creaking of boards parting company. In a short time water began to rush in and the boat began to break in two. Panic seized everybody. Most of the passengers were armed, and when they saw that a terrible death was threatening them they rose in fury against the captain and with their swords slashed him unmercifully.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

The two men at the oars jumped overboard and managed to swim ashore. All the rest were drowned. Those terrible rapids had their sacrifice of life at last. The new boat that was in building was not yet ready when I was there. 000

We were on Chinese soil once more, and everything was changed. Almost the first sight that met us was one that made us realise that though the Chinese are in many ways far ahead of the aboriginals there are some things that the latter can teach their overlords. We met, hobbling away from the market towards her village home, a little girl with the crippled feet so fashionable among the Chinese of all classes. In spite of the sage Mencius and his concise verdict to the contrary, the aboriginals have many points of character which the Sons of Han might imitate with advantage.

The sight of the little girl with the crippled feet made us realise that we were again in the land where woman takes a second place, in the land of infanticide, of the selling of girls for immorality, of huge insanitary graves, of polished insincerity, of evil-smelling streets and of hatred to foreigners. A feeling half of home-sickness came over one as one remembered the free life of the hillmen and the natural feet of the children and the way a woman or girl would look into one's face without a trace of immodest modesty.

We made our way down to the market and got settled in an inn for the night. We had done what we set out to do, and were back again in Mr Tien's district, smiling up our sleeves at the way he had been defeated on all hands.

We had not been settled in the inn long before Mr Lo, the arbitrator in local quarrels, came along to help Mr Long in a couple of difficult cases. It appeared that when we formerly

OOO stayed in this inn on our way to Nosuland the lady of the inn lent her water pipe—the Chinese hubble-bubble—to one of Mr Long's men. She stated that he had never returned it, and now came demanding either its production or the price of the pipe, which was estimated at five hundred cash. The man who was accused replied that the pipe had been passed on to one and another who wanted a smoke, and that in the end he had duly handed it back to Mrs Boniface.

In a case like this I imagine a Westerner would be somewhat nonplussed. The absolute absence of truth-telling in these disputes, except when it pays to tell it, makes a clear decision a very difficult thing to arrive at. The Chinaman has, however, evolved a way out of most difficulties, and he long ago found out how to deal with such knotty problems. He calls in the aid of the spirit world, and misfortune being so prevalent and so generally put down to the influence of malign spirits, most people are afraid wantonly to insult the denizens of the world of shades. After hearing both sides, Arbitrator Lo decided that an oath of innocence must be taken before the spirits of the heavens. If the landlady would take this oath then the five hundred cash must be paid to her. If she refused, and the accused was willing to take the oath, then the five hundred cash need not be paid, and the affair was at an end. The gods were supposed to be able to look after their side of the affair. The rank and file do not yet suppose that the gods are incapable of doing justice. I did, however, on one occasion see a distressed woman in the Temple of Hades, who evidently thought that the gods were capable of terrible mistakes or cruel wrongs. Her son had died, and she was roundly accusing the King of Hades of having seized hold of the wrong man. “You blind King !

You stupid, blind King! Why did you make such a mistake and seize hold of my boy instead of the sinner you were really after?" All her blamings and chidings failed to bring her boy back again, and one wonders whether she ever shuddered when she remembered how she had so bearded the august, terrible personage who is at the head of the regime in the Chinese Hades.

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We waited awhile in the inn while the landlady and the accused man went outside under the heavens. Presently they returned. The woman had refused to take the oath, but the man had taken it. There was no paying up of the five hundred cash. Our people persisted that it was a trumped-up case on the part of the landlady. She evidently knew the state of feeling between the head of the market town and our party, and thought it a favourable opportunity of making a little profit.

Having finished this case about the pipe, Mr Lo undertook another in which Eh-tsu, the son of the friendly widow, Ah-ku, was one of the interested parties. A Chinese named Liao and Eh-tsu's father had been friends and partners in trading in the produce of the hills. The father died and there was suspicion that Liao had poisoned him. Later on Liao had borrowed a gun from Eh-tsu, undertaking to get it thoroughly repaired. He also borrowed ten ounces of silver, of which six thousand cash, about a third of the money, had been paid back. The gun had been repaired for two and a half ounces of silver. Now Eh-tsu wanted the return of the gun and the payment of the balance of the loan. Mr Liao stated in reply that the father had borrowed twenty ounces of silver from him and that he intended to stick to the gun until the son paid up his father's debt. The father being dead and unable

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 to give evidence in the case, we wondered how Mr Lo would decide in the matter.

Once again the spirits were summoned to assist. After a lot of talk, Mr Lo decided that the gun was to be returned to Eh-tsu, and the balance of the ten taels was to be overlooked, in consideration of the poverty of Mr Liao. As to the twenty ounces said to have been borrowed by the father, Liao was to go to the grave where the ashes of Eh-tsu's father rested. He was there to kill a dog or a fowl, taking an oath as to the twenty ounces of silver. If he did that then the son was to repay the money for his father. The widow's son and his party readily agreed to this arrangement, but Mr Liao with very bad grace went for the gun he had resolved to stick to. One saw, during the few hours of that evening, what a very important part the spirits take in the settling of disputes. One wonders what will happen when the people throw over their faith in the gods and are consequently not at all nervous about taking an oath in the presence of the spirits of the heavens or of the land of the shades. Some other way will have to be devised to make the people tell the truth.

In the inn at the ferry town we missed the welcome fires around which we had sat night after night yarning. Though the fires were absent the yarning went on apace. The Chinese were deeply interested in the visit, and in the stories told by our men. Mr Tien was not ready even now to own up to his defeat. He also invoked the spirits to his aid. He persisted in telling the people that Mr Long and his party had not really gone over with me, but that I had taken their spirits across by the aid of my powerful magic. The Nosu men who returned with me told stories about the visitor and the

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stones. They said that when stones seemed to hit me they really fell harmlessly in front and did no injury. When the Chinese on the market heard this they exclaimed: "No wonder he had the pluck to go among the wild hillmen. We thought that he must have some wonderful magical powers at his disposal." Someone standing by capped the stone stories by chiming in with "It is not only stones he can stop, but bullets also." I am glad that no one ever put this to the test, or my fate would have been that of the Boxers who came with such claims to the yamen of Yuan-shi-kai when he was governor of the province of Shantung. The bullets went through them right enough.

The Chinese who went with us were very glad to be back among their own people again. They had had enough of the land where they had to play second fiddle and where there was an absence of the leeks and garlic they were so fond of. I had very much annoyed them while we were at the friendly widow's. When the veal was brought in these Chinese were disgusted. Many Chinese would rather starve than eat the flesh of the cow in any form. These men with me were of this class. When the widow asked me whether I was pleased with the meal she had got for us I used one of the few words I knew to tell her it was "delicious." This was the last straw. The Chinese thought that if only I had grumbled at the dish that was so anathema to them there would have been a chance of their getting something more to their liking. When I used the word "delicious" their hopes of a change of diet fled, and they were disgusted with the foreigner who played the game of his hosts rather than that of a few beef-hating Chinese.

We stayed only one night at the ferry town, and the next

000 day climbed up the difficult hills to Mr Long's home. All the friends there were glad to see us back in safety.

A few days after I was back home again at Chaotung, to find myself a wonder to many. That I had got safely into the land of the hillmen and come back to tell the story seemed a marvel to these Chinese, whose ideas of the hill Nosu are as exaggerated and false as many of their ideas concerning the terrible foreigner, who is commonly reported to extract the black eyes of the Chinese children that he may make a wash for his own eyes, which are of a grey colour, and so are presumed to have faded and to be incapable of seeing as clearly sa the Chinese eyes.

While I had been away all kinds of rumours had been flying about. It was reported that I had been killed, and other missionaries in the same town were afraid these reports were all too true. My wife saw them on several occasions whispering together, and speaking with serious faces, as if in the kindness of their hearts they were afraid to break the terrible news to her. She smiled at all this and refused to believe a word of the rumours. She felt sure that her husband would be back home again in safety, having accomplished what he set out to do. Some were a bit annoyed that she was so cool, and seemed to think she was frivolous in not putting on a concerned air. But she kept her own counsel, and slept soundly all those nights. It was half thought that she ought to begin to order her widow's weeds. She smiled at it all, for she knew the man Mr Long, who had been the guide of the party, and had every confidence in him. And she knew also what a lying jade Dame Rumour is.

H. E. Chen, the Defender of the Yangtse, had duly reported to the officials at Chaotung that I had gone across the river and had expressed a fear that the hillmen would murder me. 000 The Prefect, the head official of the district, was an old gentleman from the province of Kiang-si, who was very kind and friendly to us. It distressed him that I had gone into such danger, and he was anxious to rescue me if possible. Telegrams were dispatched to the Viceroy at Yunnan Fu, but the Viceroy was unable to do anything in the matter, for at that time there was no British Consul present in the city who could send orders to his fellow-subject. The Viceroy then sent a messenger to the Roman Catholic bishop, hoping that in some way he might be able to help in the difficulty the officials were experiencing. But the mandarins could fi[illegible] no one who could bring pressure on me and compel me to return to the safe shelter of the Chinese fold. Everything was working in my favour. The officials could find no way of getting at me, and while they were deep in thought and scheme for the safety of the British missionary I was having the time of my life, all unconscious of the anxiety I was causing to others. Messengers were sent in one direction and another, but as the Chinese Imperial writ did not run in Nosuland I was quite unmolested.

The friendly Prefect persuaded another missionary to write to me, telling me of my danger and advising my return. This curious letter reached me some time after I had finished my wanderings and was safe home again. It had gone on its travels to one place and another, but had failed to reach me in time to worry me in the slightest. On the big red official envelope in which the letter was enclosed was written the command: "Let the messenger fly and deliver this urgent message to the missionary Pollard." I still have this envelope as an example of how quickly an official message

000 can be delivered when the officials are anxious, or not, that it shall be delivered. Of course, in case I had been murdered, all this fuss and manœuvring would have been produced as evidence that I had deservedly met my fate, as the result of rash adventure. All's well that ends well.

On the afternoon of my arrival the Prefect called on my wife and was overjoyed to see me safe and sound. He for once forgot his correct politeness and seized me by the hand, telling me, with some emotion, how glad he was to see me back in safety. If I could have read right to the back of this gentleman's mind I should have seen that it was not so much the hillmen he had feared but the scheme of the Defender of the Yangtse, of which he was fully aware. This grasp of the hand and the heartfelt thankfulness of the Prefect showed more than anything else the extreme risk I had run, from the plottings of the mandarin Chen and his servant Mr Tien of the ferry town.

The Prefect asked me whether I had not felt afraid among the hillmen. I assured him that the wildmen were such gentlemen that I had felt at home with them all the time. He looked puzzled, and wondered whether my long stay in China had not taught me to hide the truth as adroitly as the Chinese. It used to be amusing, years gone by, to watch how some Chinese would receive some of the stories you told them about life in foreign countries. They would readily believe some preposterous yarns which were current everywhere, but tell them the story of the underground railway in London, and now and again a smile would break out on some face as if the hearer were coming to the conclusion that the foreign story-teller knew how to tell lies as well as he could do it himself.

My wife very much enjoyed the story of the little girl with the coral beads, and I told her that Vri-ha, who had been so keen on the match, was coming across soon to see us. Not long after, he and several others came. After the first greetings were over I went and fetched the lady of the house, and was very curious to see how she would greet the man who had tried so hard to introduce a rival into her home. One of the most delightful things about a good woman is that you are never sure just what she is going to do. There is an element of uncertainty and surprise about her actions. This lady went up to Vri-ha, greeted him with her sweetest, most friendly smile, and assured him he was very welcome as a guest in her home. I rather fancy she treated the whole episode as if in some way it were a compliment to herself in having found a husband whom the hillmen had taken to and treated so chivalrously. I am not sure about this. But there! Who is ever sure about anything that has to do with a real woman? You may lift the veil off Nosuland, you may find out all the secrets of those wonderful hills and brave people, but the veil over the still more wonderful heart of a good woman is only half lifted, and no adventurous traveller has ever explored all the secrets that lie hidden there.

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5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4
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CHAPTER XXIX

QUERY ? CHINA'S HIDDEN MENACE

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TWO or three years ago I had the privilege of spending a rainy week in a small room in an aboriginal village. the circumstances were unusual in that I had another Englishman as companion. It is not often that such is the case. One usually travels about among these hills with only native companions. When one does have another European with him conversation usually goes at a great rate and all things under the sun are discussed. This week we two Britishers spent in that little room, unable to get out anywhere, we had long discussions on the problems facing China. Both of us are friends of this great people, and anxious that she shall prosper in all right ways. My friend is a journalist, and was travelling across China, anxious to see all that was to be seen and learnt. Unlike many others, he did not confine his travels to the beaten paths, but went into all kinds of out-of-the-way places where no Europeans except missionaries had been before. He was keen on the aboriginal question, and came to the conclusion that in the aboriginals of West China there was, all-patent to him, "China's Hidden Menace." We spent hours over this question. Some time after, in one of the Shanghai papers there appeared, written by the friend who had shared wet and cold and mud galore with me, an informing article under the above title. The writer came to the conclusion that unless China adopted a strong policy she might find herself strongly menaced by the aboriginals in these western provinces of China. At the end of his article the 000 writer made the suggestion that when the troubles of the Revolution were over employment might be found for the troops of General Li, who has since become Vice-President, in reducing the tribes to such a state that they would never be able successfully to menace China. One is glad to think that there is no statesman at the present likely to adopt the attitude suggested by this Western advice. My advice to the Chinese Government would be of an entirely opposite nature. In these brave hillmen the Chinese have material for one of the finest armies it would be possible to find in all Asia. Flouted and badly treated, these people might prove themselves more than a menace. It is true that there are forces in China which are dark, and just how they will shape and move no one can tell with certainty. For instance, in the year of the Boxer rising, which meant so much to the world, and among other results led to the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty, nearly all foreigners in the interior of China were ordered by their consuls to withdraw to the coast. Just the night before the Chaotung party left that city a military mandarin called on me. He chatted away and sent his servant home again, with instructions to call for him later on. By-and-by, when we were quite alone in my sitting-room, this official confided to me a deep secret. It was to the effect that if either the English or the French invaded Yunnan the Mohammedans in a certain direction were ready to join the invaders at the proper moment, and this official wished me to make arrangements for this plan to be carried out. Needless to say, I had nothing to do with the affair, and as the principal in the matter has been dead for years it does not matter mentioning it. One who has enjoyed the hospitality of China

OOO for so many years would be a renegade if he worked against the country where he has lived so long. This incident, however, shows that China has in her mixed peoples problems to solve which will tax her best statesmanship.

Though the Republic of China is, at the time of writing, in its early stages, already it has been made clear that among the most difficult problems facing the Central Government are the questions touching the dependencies. The Mongolian question has not yet been solved, and it will most certainly sooner or later lead to war between Russia and China, in which Japan will most likely be involved also. When China gets strong enough, or when Russia is convinced that she must force the pace, the crisis will certainly come to a head.

The question of Manchuria is still more pressing. The population of those "Three Eastern Provinces," as Manchuria is known to the Chinese, far outnumbers now the descendants of the old tribes which, under the leadership of Nurachi and Dorgum, made such a mark on the history of China, and ruled with such success over one of the greatest empires of the world. Into the midst of the Chinese population of these three provinces there has come a large immigration of Russians and Japanese, and this has complicated a problem never easy of solution. In Manchuria alone there are problems which will give trouble to statesmen for many years to come.

The world has also seen what a tremendous struggle China has had in Tibet, and at present it looks as if she will retain only a nominal hold over that vast upper-world region. The immense expenditure of men and money which at first, under General Chao, gave the Chinese victory over practically the whole of Tibet, and brought Chinese soldiers right to the

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gate of India, seems now to have been in vain. In Eastern Tibet, where the Chinese soldiers were all-powerful, the Tibetans have driven them out, and guard jealously and very successfully the outer gates to their upland homes.

There has been a fear all along lest the Nosu and other tribes should join hands with the Tibetans and oust China from a large part of the great province of Szechuan, the premier province of the whole country. Some of the more ardent of the younger officers have advocated expeditions into Nosuland, but the older and wiser ones, who have seen what has been the result of the late fighting with the Tibetans in a country something like Nosuland, are by no means anxious to embark on such hazardous adventures.

A far wiser plan would be to win the confidence of these hill people, and to engage their restless spirits on the side of the Chinese Government. The Chinese army, as seen in its new developments in Western China, is essentially weak in cavalry. Southern Chinese do not readily take to horse-riding. The fact that a very large part of the land in South China is given over to the swampy cultivation of rice may account for the fact that there has been no special attempt to cultivate a mounted arm to the armies in the south. Yet in former years cavalry has played an important part in the military history of China. It was practically one great cavalry charge which gave the Empire to the Manchus. This one historic cavalry charge gave the leader of an almost unknown tribe the rulership of one of the greatest, if not the greatest, empires the world has ever seen. No one need take exception to this statement, for in a very real sense the Manchu dominions formed an empire very different to the immense British Empire. The latter is really an alliance of

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5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

000 different races and different countries owning a nominal allegiance to the central ruler. On the other hand, the Manchu Emperor really ruled over an enormous number of people holding similar customs, language, literature and religion. China has been and is unique in this.

The historic cavalry charge referred to is too little known by Europeans. The fate of the whole Empire was in the balance at the hardly contested battle fought at Shan Hai Kwan, where the Great Wall ends at the sea. It was the tremendous charge of ten thousand Manchu horsemen across the plain which gave the victory to General Wu Sankwei and annihilated his enemies. The capture of Peking immediately followed, and then came the seating of the chieftain of an obscure tribe on the Dragon Throne. This was the beginning of more than two centuries of Manchu rule, in the early days of which the exploits of the cavalry helped to make the throne secure. What cavalry has done once it can do again in a land like China.

In these Nosu hillmen China has the material for some of the finest cavalry that exists in all Southern Asia. These men are born horsemen. They love the open air. Fighting is in their very bones, and they would be willing, if China treated them courteously, and on a footing of equality, to serve their overlords with loyalty. Instead of referring to these men as the "Hidden Menace of China," who must sooner or later be ruthlessly put down, I would rather say that in the millions of West China aboriginals China has hidden treasures which, if rightly used, might save her in her hour of dire need. I have noticed how some of the Nosu bands annihilated an army of the Taipings that was devastating West China. These men are capable of doing such

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE✓

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a feat again. If in further expeditions to Tibet, instead of using soft Szechuan soldiers, who cannot fight except on steamed rice and ordinary Chinese civilised food, of which Tibet produces none, a few thousand of these hardy hillmen, who can live on the coarsest food, were trained and generously led, there might be a hope that Tibet would be no longer a sealed country given over to the blighting influences of a celibate but not pure Lamaism, but would be opened to Chinese civilisation, which is one of the finest civilisations the world has ever known. Speaking as a missionary, one wishes that would happen; for then there would be a chance of carrying the teachings of the Saviour of the World to the highest parts of the continent where He lived and died. With the Anglo-Indian policy which has ruled up till now in the permanent ascendency, there is no hope of the opening up of Tibet. The people must for ever remain in the ignorance of Lamaism and celibacy and polyandry, so that Russia and China may be kept from advancing a step nearer to India! The exigencies of British foreign policy condemn for ever people who need the light and help of true education and religion! Darkness must continue to rule the Roof of the World that there may be no scares in India!

The idea of using these Nosu hillmen in the service of the Central Government occurred at least to one master mind. H. E. Chao, whose conquering of rebellious Tibet startled and very much woke up the Government of India, was one of the strongest partisans of the late Manchu dynasty. He fought very hard to suppress the provincial rising in Szechuan, which, while nominally concerned with the railway policy of the country, was really the beginning of the Revolution which has overthrown so much. It seemed at one time as if

000 he would succeed in his struggle. News from other provinces concerning the success of the new movement weakened his stand, and made his men wish to turn to the popular party. He then turned to the hill tribes of Nosuland and tried to persuade them to ally themselves with him and make a descent in his favour on the rich plains of Szechuan. This policy of the Manchu partisan exasperated the people, and all through the province there were cries for his head. He was at last captured and put to death, one of the greatest blunders of the revolutionary party. With the death of the great general his scheme of enlisting the Nosu tribes fell through. What has occurred to one will occur to another, and we may yet see the Nosu hillmen taking a prominent part in the movements of the Central Government of China.

Once before there was an attempt to enlist the aid of the aboriginals on the side of a sorely pressed government. When Japan was winning her victories by sea and land against the untrained troops of China, it occurred to some mandarin with more imagination than sense that the Miao tribes, with their deadly bows and arrows, might come to the rescue of the defeated armies. Li Hung-chang thereupon sent west for detachments of aboriginal troops. A large number of these were persuaded to enlist, and departed for the coast. I do not know what were the inducements held out to them, but I was told that they went, relying on the virtues of their aboriginal weapons, which had helped them in their local fights against men and wild beasts. It is hoped that they never met the trained Japanese soldiers, for in that case they would have been totally destroyed.

A number of these Miao were also engaged by the revolutionary Government in 1911 to help in the struggle with the Manchus. 000

To some far-seeing statesmen, and China has many such in her land, these Nosu do not constitute a hidden menace but rather a reserve to fall back on in hour of need. If China is to get the best help from these great tribes, then there must be a change in the attitude which many of the educated classes adopt towards those who are not properly entitled to call themselves Sons of Han. A few incidents which I have seen of China's treatment of those Nosu will illustrate how the Chinese should not conduct themselves towards the brave Nosu of the hill lands.

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

CHAPTER XXX

THE CANDID GENERAL AND THE CONCEITED ARTIST

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AFTER my return from Nosuland, tribesmen from that unknown part of China frequently came across the river to see Nhe-jah-jah at Chaotung. To some of them the journey and experiences were just as remarkable as mine had been into the heart of their hospitable land. These visitors were always welcome, and seemed to look upon our home as a part of their own land. They treated me as a member of the clans, and as such sought my help more than once.

One of the most interesting cases in which I was able to render help to the men of the hills, and at the same time do a kindness to the people of Chaotung, is the following.

One evening, after all the work in our busy mission compound was over, a Nosu from across the Yangtse came into my little study to talk about a very important matter. Some distance south of the part of Nosuland I had visited the province of Yunnan stretches across the river and the Yangtse is no longer the boundary line. The hill-people of Nosuland can, therefore, easily cross into China proper, and, on the other hand, the Chinese land workers can easily encroach on the territory of the tribes. It seems to be the eternal lot of the Chinese to be pushing somebody farther back, whether in West China, in the Malay States, in Mongolia, in Tibetan borderland, or in a score of other places. The eternal struggle which these four hundred millions have with the wolf at the door is largely the cause of this constant 648 pushing back.

One of the most important Black Bloods in the district 648 we are referring to was a chief named Luh. The Chinese 721 official in charge of that district acted as many of these border officials act, and at last he drove Luh out of his home and confiscated all his lands. If you have soldiers at your command, it is comparatively easy to make a start in this fashion, but usually the Chinese have to pay a very heavy price for a policy of this kind. The hillmen do not readily forgive such actions, and having in the past known what it was to defeat Chinese, Chief Luh and his men determined to have their own back again. The Chinese garrison at Pei-sha was attacked and overwhelmed. Then frantic messages were sent to the Viceroy at Yunnan Fu, who promptly ordered soldiers to proceed to the scene of the trouble and exterminate Luh and his party. Orders like this were easily given in those days, but not so easily carried out, for most of the soldiers in the various camps were on paper only. A garrison that actually possessed thirty per cent. of its nominal roll of men was in a healthy condition. Those were the days before the great Manchu Viceroy Hsi-liang, altered all that. When he came into the province of Yunnan he sent men secretly to see the actual state of the various garrisons. These brought back their reports. On the strength of these reports, several military officials were summoned to the city where the Viceroy had his residence. They went, not suspecting what was in store for them. A few days after their arrival, to the surprise of the whole city, and even more to the officials, one or two of these military men, whose paper soldiers were more than usually numerous, were publicly

648 721 beheaded. A great shock went through the province, and recruiting was very brisk for the next few months. Those military heads taken off made a surprising difference to the actual strength of the Chinese forces in the Far West.

The trouble with Chief Luh was before the stern regime of the Viceroy Hsi-liang, and so it was with some difficulty that the forces necessary for the putting down of the Nosu fighters were obtained.

Soldiers began to concentrate on Pei-sha, but in the preliminary skirmishes the fortunes of war went against the Chinese. Still further frantic reports were sent to the Viceroy. Two generals and a large number of soldiers were ordered to the scene of the trouble. All the north of Yunnan was excited. At Chaotung hundreds of raw fellows were persuaded to join the colours, and soon there were large bands of troops moving down towards the Yangtse. Things, however, progressed slowly. The hillmen were in earnest. The Chinese troops were untrained. All the south of Nosuland began to wake up, and the war tocsin was sounded far and wide.

It was at this time that the Nosu came to my study at night. He brought a very roundabout message from Chief Luh to Nhe-jah-jah, asking if I could help to make peace and get the stolen lands restored. He promised that if the Chinese would only give back his lands he would withdraw his forces and make no further trouble He said that the Chinese officials were so treacherous that he was afraid to deal with them, but expressed perfect confidence in my being able to bring about peace if I only tried. I promised to do all I could, and advised the messenger to tell Luh to keep his forces back for a while, until he should see if the English

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friend of the Nosu could do anything in the matter. I called on the general in charge of the garrison at Chaotung and told him all my story. He wanted to see the messenger from Nosuland, but I had waited until he was safely away before I approached the general. General Chao was very kind and promised to report the matter to the Viceroy, which he duly did. So that I might keep quite square in the matter, I wrote to the British Consul-General at Yunnan Fu, telling him all that was happening and asking his kind assistance in the affair. Sir W. H. Wilkinson readily promised his assistance, and to his kind, entirely unofficial representations the Nosu and Chinese owed much. A new general was on the point of leaving Yunnan Fu for Chaotung, and before he left he had an interview with the Consul-General. When he came to Chaotung he seemed willing to use the English missionary to further his ends if possible. The Viceroy authorised the new general to send word to Chief Luh that if he kept the peace for one year he should have one-third of his lands restored; if for two years, then two-thirds; and if for three years, then the whole of his lands should be returned to him.

Early in October this General Su called on me, and [illegible] had a delightful talk about the Nosu. The general was most candid and told [illegible]e and others depended on troubles such as this for [illegible]on, and that if peace were made quickly there was [illegible] likelihood of the colour of the button on his official hat being changed for that of a higher rank. Just before he came in to see me, a widow woman had called on me. Her son had joined, and was just off to Pei-sha to fight the warlike Nosu. He was an only son, and the widow begged me to help her in getting him off, as she

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did not want to run the risk of being left alone in the world. Remembering the widow, I begged General Su for once not to trouble about the colour of his hat's button but to think of the inner feelings of pity which existed in his heart. The next day I returned the general's visit and found him and another general sitting together. We all three yarned up in the guest-hall about the fighting. These military men wanted a good fight and a great victory. The missionary wanted to stop the war. Very likely these two men of war smiled at my pleadings. They asked me to persuade Chief Luh to come to Chaotung and confer with them, promising to give him a safe conduct. It looked as if I were getting my way in winning the sympathy of these two men.

Then, with a sudden change, General Su switched the conversation on to an entirely different line by asking me an altogether unexpected question. He said he had read the Gospel of St John, and had noticed in it the story of the man blind from birth, about whom Jesus said that "neither had this man sinned nor his parents." General Su said: "We believe that punishment follows sin. If this man had not sinned, why had not Jesus prevented him from being born blind?" So we got away from the Nosu troubles, into a question that has puzzled thinking men from the time of Job until now.

By the easy way in which the secrets of Chinese yamens leak out, it came to my knowledge that the trouble at Pei-sha had been reported to Peking, and that orders had come from the Central Government that Luh was to be executed if caught. Practically at the same time as he was talking so pleasantly with me, about the problem of trouble and pain, General Su was giving instructions that if Luh came to

Chaotung in his absence he was to be dispatched at once. 648
Luh had sent word that he was quite ready to come, if I 721
would go surety for him. I took good care that he did not come.

The forces at Pei-sha made little headway against the Nosu, and when the latter, adopting the advice sent from Chaotung, withdrew for a while, negotiations were opened on the spot, and at last an agreement was come to which rendered further fighting unnecessary. The soldiers returned. The widow's son got safely home. The orders from Peking were not carried out. You can't kill your hare unless you first catch him. General Su was still friendly, but I did not hear that he got a change of button. We chatted together as before, but I never told him that someone had shown me a copy of his orders for the execution of Chief Luh, had he come across to Chaotung, believing the assurances that had been given to the foreigner concerning the safety of his life. The Chinese will never win these hill Nosu to their side until their local officials carry out in a generous manner the great, broad policy of equal treatment and toleration, which has been the aim of some of the best statesmen of this great country. Had Chief Luh carried out his intentions, and come to Chaotung, trusting to the help of Nhe-jah-jah, there would have been a tragedy, and I should never have cared to approach the friends of Nosuland again.

Since writing the first part of this chapter I have, by the 000
kindness of the present British Consul-General at Yunnan Fu, received a copy of an illustrated pamphlet, written by one of the professors in a Government school of that city. The title of the pamphlet is *Illustrated Records of the Aboriginals of Yunnan*. The price is half-a-dollar. There

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000 are a few pages devoted to a description of some of the strange customs of the tribes, and then there are thirty-four pictures of people from as many tribes. The pictures are gross caricatures, some of them being simply horrible. The Chinese ideographs used, in giving the names of these tribes-people, have the "dog" radical prefixed to them, showing that the author of the pamphlet still follows the objectionable method of referring to these races, who have persisted through so many centuries, in spite of the pressure brought to bear on them by the ever-advancing Chinese. The first page of the book has a photo of the author, which is very different from the pictures supposed to represent the various tribes-men. Yet I will guarantee that there are many men in these tribes who are purer in thought, more graceful in disposition and infinitely kinder than many of those who sit in judgment on them.

So long as the attitude of the local Chinese towards these hillmen is that of the writer of this pamphlet, there will always be strained feelings between the Chinese and these aboriginal races.

It is interesting, however, to see that an educated Chinaman has thought the tribesmen of Yunnan worth writing about, and while this first attempt evidently springs from an idea that the aboriginals are strange and bizarre, and worth holding up to ridicule and wonder, later on others will find that their customs and history are well worth studying. When that time comes we may get the book which is so badly needed.

One or two things in this new book are interesting. The first story told refers to a custom of the Nosu in the west of Yunnan, who, when there is pestilence about, call in the aid of the wizards. The wizards proceed to deal with the trouble as follows. A lucky day is first chosen. When that arrives, two long poles are placed on the ground, and a ladder of swords is made by tying thirty-six swords crosswise to these poles. The village folk, by means of ropes, pull this ladder of swords upright. The wizard then seizes a fowl, goes through his incantations, and then, with naked feet, walks up the ladder, treading on the edges of the blades as he goes. The fowl is let off from the top of the ladder, and it is unlucky for anyone with whom it comes in contact as it is falling down. The wizard then returns down the ladder, still walking the swords. He further shows his power by dancing on red-hot ploughshares. 00C

This sword-ladder business is part of the magical stock in trade of some Taoists in other parts of China. It would be a surprise if it were discovered that the origin of many of the magical arts of the Taoists was among the Nosu of West China.

The second story is interesting, as it agrees with a story told me by a Black Blood Nosu while we were at Mr Long's, waiting to cross over into Nosuland. The story describes how the Nosu punish thieves by burning them alive. The Black Blood at Mr Long's told us that at his village a slave, after the death of his master, turned robber. One night he set fire to a house, and was caught red-handed. His arms and legs were broken immediately, so that he could not escape. Then it was decided to burn him publicly. It was at first proposed to burn him on the public road, but then there was a fear that his spirit might haunt those who used the road. So it was finally agreed to burn him at the grave of his grandparent. Three hundred families joined in the 685 burning, each bringing a quota of firewood. The robber was first given a good meal of rice and wine, and then he was placed on the top of the fire. He was kept in position by means of spear and trident. In half-an-hour the robber was consumed, and a grave was built up over the ashes. There was a lot of trouble before this affair was settled, and the man who told me the story, the chief mover in the burning, had to pay up well before the relatives of the burnt man let the matter drop. I have been shown places where thieves have been lynched in this summary manner.

One can easily see how the strangeness of the customs of the aboriginals has aroused the curiosity of the Chinese, and in many cases brought on their ridicule. If the Chinese would only study the best side of the tribes-folk they might be willing to appreciate these people and to draw them into the common band of patriotic members of this great country. The strong spirit which moves the Nosu and other tribes of West China would be a valuable addition to the life of China.

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CHAPTER XXXI

A WREATH OF STONES AROUND CORAL BEADS

THE ambitious schemes of Vri-ha and his friends having 584
fallen through it was necessary to make some other 589
arrangements for the little girl who had sat alone around the fire in that circle of sixteen men. Among both Chinese and aboriginals it is the rule that all marry. Old maids are unknown. There are a few cases where daughters [888] refuse to marry so that they may wait on their parents in their old age. This is only done, however, in cases where there are no sons and consequently no daughters-in-law. A daughter who in such a case refuses to marry wins the respect and even honour of all people and her case is sometimes reported to the throne as worthy of due reward. There are also the priestesses and nuns, who are spinsters, but these are but a small fraction of the whole population. A husband for every woman and a wife for every man is the rule of the land. Adam needs Eve, and vice versa. The Orient does not break the rule of the Garden of Eden. The social arrangement made at the beginning of race by the highest authority remains true in the Orient to this day.

Vri-ha's little sister was, after a while, betrothed to a Black 584
Blood living not far from the home of the friendly widow. I remember it as a house where the rows of charms to keep off the demons were more than usually numerous. Later on it was seen that these charms were unable to save little Coral Beads in the hour when she had to face her great trial.

584 This marriage, like all marriages in the Orient, was contracted with the aid of a go-between. The Nosu have an interesting custom in relation to these go-betweens. When the day of the marriage comes round the go-between goes to the bride's home to announce the date and to see that the bride is ready to go to her husband's home. When the go-between reaches the bride's home the latter's people begin to chide and blame the go-between for arranging an affair which means the loss of the daughter whom all are so fond of. Sometimes the girl's folk beat the go-between quite severely. It is not always a paying business to concern oneself in the family affairs of others.

585 There is an enormous amount of eating and drinking at the weddings of important Nosu. When the Earth Eye Too, whose burning raids were referred to in Chapter IX., married his only son to the daughter of another Earth Eye, there was a round of feasting such as Nosuland rarely sees. For seven days and nights the feasting was kept up. Being near to Chinese territory, a lot of the Chinese came as guests. The marriage of the son of the most important chief in Southern Nosuland was a matter to interest even Chinese. To accommodate the pork-loving appetites of his Chinese guests, Chief Too killed one hundred and forty pigs. For the Nosu guests, forty oxen were slain. There was no room in his castle for the ten thousand guests that appeared during those seven days of feasting, so the substitute for tables was laid on a plain near the chief's castle. The wine, or rather spirit, drunk on this occasion was carried around in water-buckets, and the guests drank as if they were drinking water. On such occasions, when men are well drunk, there is often a lot of quarrelling and fighting. These fights, however, are easily

stopped when anyone of importance intervenes. It is said 585 also that women can readily stop a fight between two men. If two husbands are trying their strength on each other in a way that threatens to have dangerous results the wives will come and lay hold each of the head-poke of her husband. The man stops at once at this action, and meckly goes away with his wife. Such is the story I was told, and though I believe it to be true I should like to see the story carried out before vouching for its accuracy.

Although the feast for the Coral Girl's wedding was not 164 such a brilliant affair as that for the son of Chief Too, it was a great day in her life. She soon settled down to the ordinary life of the wife of a full Black Blood. Before very long she came up against a trouble which has been one of the most terrible scourges of Nosuland. Typhoid fever came to the home, and then the days were very black indeed. Typhoid is one of the greatest enemies of a Nosu home. The stories that come to one about the ravages of this pestilence are heart-rending. While I am writing this, away over some hills at the back there are a number of Nosu ill with typhoid, and several have died. So virulent is it in that direction that the folk say: "Ill one die one."

Two or three years ago typhoid attacked an aborigine family. Every member of the family died and the neighbours were too afraid of contagion to bury the dead. I was told that dogs devoured the corpses. This happened south of the Yangtse, and not among the hills of Nosuland. I have heard typhoid stories even worse than this.

Coral Beads and her husband both fell ill. The wizards came and went through their incantations, hoping to drive away the demon that is so much dreaded. They failed, as

164 they so often fail, and both the sick folk died, leaving two little orphan boys behind. Somewhere on the hills of Nosuland there is a small circle of stones. Just below the soil there rest a few ashes, and these are the remains of the Girl with the Coral Beads.

C28 Her brother Vri-ha lives on and takes his share in the tribal fights. He and the Nosu who boxed with the Frenchman had a quarrel, and it was determined to fight it out. The boxer's band was the stronger, and drove Vri-ha and his party into a tower. It was proposed to burn the tower down, but better counsels prevailed, and the attacking party retired. As they were retiring Vri-ha fired and killed one of the boxer's men. There is no chance yet of the quarrel between these two relatives being made up. Again blood will have to wipe out blood and the vicious circle will continue to revolve its round of death.

C[illegible] Over the scenes that seemed so fair a short time ago these terrible troubles have come. Leprosy and suicide have taken away the brave Vri-[illegible]ee. The black scourge, typhoid, has sent Coral Beads and her husband to the cremation fires, and the tribal fights have separated relatives who seemed so friendly when Mr Long and Nhe-jah-jah were wandering around among the hills of Nosuland.

The white towers along the valley of the Upper Yangtse still tell their story of the fear of the hillmen. The Chinese near the rushing waters still sing their songs of love and passion and the raids of the aborigines. Mr Tien is still the chief man of the ferry town, but, in spite of marrying many wives, has no son. Providence is therefore said to be on the side of the many who have suffered from his all-too-successful plottings. The rapids at Shin Chan Keo roar and tumble

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in their mad rush to the sea. Now and again the white clouds 000 fill the whole of the valley between the hills of Chaotung and the hills where the brave tribesmen live and love and wonder. When one looks on that superb white way that joins the south and the north together one wishes that the days when Chinese soldiers shall tramp through those valleys and over those hills, bringing change, destruction, idol temples, crippled feet, unsightly graves and huge, ungainly coffins, may be in the very far distance. Then again, when the white clouds are gone, and one thinks of the last stand in the burning tower, and of the never-ending blood feuds where blood succeeds blood and never satisfies the inexorable demands of the law of revenge, one wishes for a settled Government which shall keep all the chiefs in order. Whatever happens, best wishes and God's blessing to all the kind friends of Unknown China.

INDEX

000

ABORIGINAL races, 51
Ah-Ku, 231
Ah-Pooh, 115
Ah-yee the Earth Eye, 153
An the Earth Eye and Lo-chee, 151, 156
Anti-opium campaign, 152
Athletics amongst the Chinese, 173

BABER, Mr Colborne, 256
Babus, the, 45
Bamboo candle, a, 223
Barter and exchange, 103
Bears, 205
Bears' paws, 193
Bedrooms, primitive, 80
Birds, fighting, 238
Black bloods, 180
Black Nosu, the, 137
Blockhouses, 36
Boars, 84
Books and manuscripts, 258
Boxer, a Nosu, 78
Breakfast, a Nosu, 123
Brooches, Nosu, 120
Brooke, Lieutenant, 125
"Broth of Oblivion," 44
Buckwheat cakes, 268
Buddhism, 181
Burials, Chinese, 129

CAMERA, my, 68
Cannibal feast, a, 273
Capes, 100
Caste, 137
Cavalry, Chinese, 301
Caves, fortified, 40
"Changing tenancies," 143
Chao, 303
Chaotung, 32, 61
Charms, 197, 198, 217
Chen, H. E., 71
Chentu, opium dens at, 172
Child life and suffering in China, 130
China as a conquering nation, 53
Chinaman's mind, the, 48
"China's Hidden Menace," 298
Chinese, athletics amongst the, 173
Chinese and Mantsz, 38
Chinese grave, a, 272
Chinese land system, 145
Chinese, morality of the, 171
Chinese wives, 148
Chinese women, feet of, 97
Chinese written language, 257
Chungking, 28
Clan warfare, 244
Coffin boards, 114
Cooking, Nosu, 105
Courtesy in Nosuland, 210
Cremation, 127
Crime and criminals, 160
Cultivation near the Yangtse, 42
Cursing, a pole of, 229

DANDY, a, 130
Death customs, 127
"Defender of the Yangtse," 21
Dentistry, Nosu, 274
Disease in China, 180
Disputes, a method of settling, 291
Dogs, Nosu, 64
Dolls and witchcraft, 93
Dress, Nosu, 120

EARTH EYES, 137, 180
Earth Eyes, stories about, 146
Edelweiss, 64
Eggs used by wizards, 189
El Dorado, 135
Escort, a strong, 271

"FAIRY BRIDGE," the, 32
Feast, a Nosu, 63

[p. 320 is blank]

000

Felt cloaks, 196
Ferries on the Yangtse, 42, 71, 285
Feudal system, 137
Fishing in the Yangtse, 31
Flowers in Nosuland, 126
Fowls, 90
Fratricide, 150
Frost and snow, 195
Fukwan, 30
Furniture, lack of, 88

Gag, an effective, 83
Girl with coral beads, 17, 219, 297, 315
Goats and sheep, 66
Gold, 135
Golden pheasants, 206
Grass, a troublesome, 82
Grimm's law, an Oriental, 265
Gu-tieh, 197
Guns, Nosu, 220
Gypsum, 35

Hades, Chinese conception of, 253
Hardiness of the Nosu, 176
Hawser bridge, a, 46
Head horns, 235
Headdress, a huge, 116
Hen river, the, 32
Hill of Slippery Sand, the, 43
Hillmen, wild, 39
Honesty of the Nosu, 194
Hong-Kong, 51
Horse riding, 132
Horses, the value of, 133
Horses, West China, 270
Hospitality, 109
Household, a Nosu, 65, 201
Hsi-liang, Viceroy, 308
Hsu, Mr, 61

Ichang, 25
Illustrated Records of the Aboriginals of Yunnan, 311
Indemnity for shedding blood, 203

Japanese language, the, 55
Japanese War, the, 20
Jews' harp, a, [illegible]

Kidnapping a wife, 156

Lai-lai and Sha-ma clans, 278
Lamas, the, 180
Land nationalisation, 145
Languages, Nosu and Miao, 55, 256
Laughter, the value of, 86
Legend of a pool and a snake, 227
Leopards, 91
Leprosy, 183
Li Hung-chang, 304
Little and Great Danger, 33
Little, Mr A., 29
Liu, or transporter, 46
Lo, arbitrator, 72, 290
Lo-chee, 146
Lolo, the, 38
Long, General, 53
Long, Mr, 18, 61, 63, 65, 81, 102, 124, 174, 185, 228
Luh, Chief, 307

Magic lantern, my, 22, 113, 124, 225
Magic mountains, 182
Magpies, 177
Manchuria, 300
Mandarin, powers of a, 71
Mandarin rule, 145
Mandarin's home, a, 26
Mantsz, the, 37
Mao Shui Kong, 30
Margary, 20
Marriage among the Nosu, 102
Marriage problem, a, 97
Matrimonial plan, an unwelcome, 228
Medicines, 184
Mengtse, 20
Miao men, 52
Mi-tieh, 20
Mock fight, a, 240
Mohammedan rebellion, the, 178
Morality, 170
Mother, a courageous, 61
Mouth organ, a useful, 125
Mushrooms, 103
Myths, Nosu, 223

Navigation on the Yangtse, 28
Necromancers, a dupe of, 154

Nhe-ja-ja, 120
Njeh clan, the, 200
Nosu, the, 21; and Chinese, 23, 38, 54; language, 55; origin, 57; houses, 64; dogs, 64, 80; a chief, 91; simple amusements, 92; wizards, 93, 106; females, 97; Too, 98; water-carrying, 101; women, 102; marriage, 102; tree-climbing, 103; cooking, 105; men, 105; hospitality, 109; supper, 111; head-dress, 116; trial by ordeal, 117; dress, 120; pipes, 121; breakfast, 123; death customs, 127; spear fighting, 131; stone-throwing, 131; horse-riding, 132; feudal system, 137; retainers and slaves, 140; rents, 143; Earth Eyes, 146; their crimes, 156; morality, 170; sports, 174; troubadours, 174; hardiness, 176; social ranks, 180; honesty, 194; raiders, 202; etiquette, 216; myths, 223; philosophy, 225; opium, 238; mock battle, 240 warfare, 243; Pee-mo, 248; ideas of future life, 253; language, 256; dentistry, 274
Nosuland, first impressions, 80; primitive bedrooms, 89; dwarf oak-trees, 99; sheep, 100; Chie-tsu Leh-chieh, 105; scenery, 114; flowers, 126; magpies, 177; frost and snow, 195: houses, 201
ya-pa and the looking-glass, 208

AK-TREES, dwarf, 99
atmeal and cold water, 198
il for burning, 234
il-tree orchards, 34
ive-trees, 84
o-Chi Lama, the, 180
pium in Nosuland, 238
rdeal, trial by, 117
xhide Rapid, the, 30

PALACES" or secret societies, 74
se-mo or wizards, 248
Peh-eye the Earth Eye, 164 000
Philosophy, Nosu, 225
Pipes, Nosu tobacco, 121
Plain of the Great Well, 45
Plant, Captain, 29
Plot, Mr Tien's, 177
Plots, 73
Polyandry, 181
Ponies, diminutive, 134

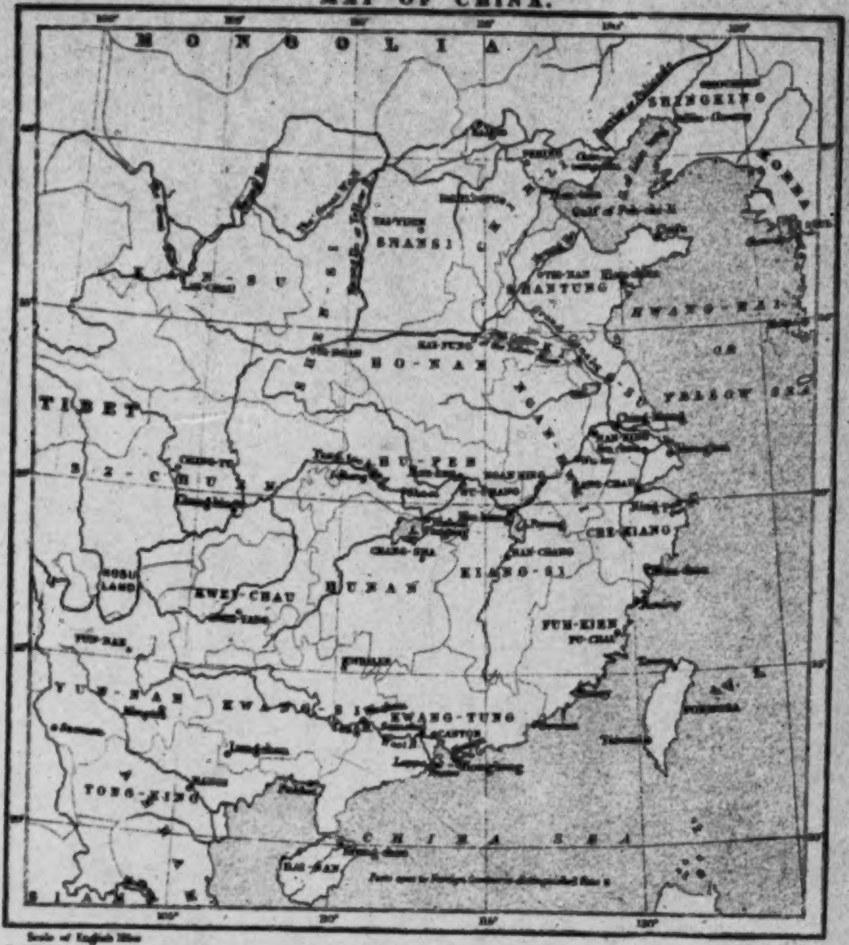
RAFTS on the Yangtse, 34
"Ragging" by women, 170
Raiders, 40
Raiding, 202
Ransom and torture, 282
Rapids of the Yantgse, 28, 30
Raven, the tit and the wren, story of, 99
Religions, 251
Rent, payment of, 139
Retainers and slaves, 140
Revenge, the law of, 121
Rice-fields, 85
Rim of the Iron Pan,34
Road, a difficult, 83
Roads, dreadful, 269
Romance, a Nosu, 154

SALT as a medium of exchange, 103
Savin, Dr L., 185
Secret societies, 73
Sha-ma clan, the, 122
Shan, the, 54
Shanghai, mixed races in, 50
Sheep, Nosu, 100
Shih-ha Chich-ku, 210
Shin Chan Keo, 69
Silkworms, 100
Silver mines, abandoned, 76
Slaves and retainers, marriage of, 142
Social ranks, 180
Spear fighting, 131
Spirits and wine drinkers, 46
Sports amongst the Nosu, 174
State robes, 246
Stone mills, 237
Stone-throwers, Nosu, 77
Stories of the origin of the Nosu, 57

5: Pollard M-5 (no date) 1921 AE4 Lolo AE4

131

MAP OF CHINA.


MONGOLIA
SHINGKING
KOREA
Gulf of Pe-chi-li
KAN-SU
SHENSI
SHANSI
SHANTUNG
HWANG-HAI OR YELLOW SEA
HO-NAN
KIANG-SU
TIBET
SZ-CHUEN
HU-PEH
CHE-KIANG
HUNAN
KIANG-SI
KWEI-CHAU
FUH-KIEN
YUN-NAN
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[Map facing p. 321]

000 *Story of the Three Kingdoms, The*, 74
Stratagem, a Nosu, 241
Sugar, brown, 99
Sugar cane, 84
Suicide, 187
Suit of clothes, a laughter-causing, 115
Sun Yat-sen, Dr, 146
Supper, a Nosu, 111
Sweet turnips, 197

TAIPING rebels and the varnish, 234
Taxes, payment of, 138
Telescope, a powerful, 68, 81
Temple of Hades, the, 43
Tenants and landlords, 144
Teng-Shiao, Mr, 75, 78
Teofu, 35
Thrushes, 238
Tibetan written language, 181
Tibetans, the, 180
Tigers, 205
Tien, Mr, 70, 117, 280
Tobacco-smoking horse, a, 153
Too, overlord, 98, 118
Towers, borderland, 41
Traffic on the Yangtse, 32
Transporter bridge, a, 46
Tree-climbing, 103
Trees, Nosu, 114
Tribal warfare, 45
Tribes of Western China, 54
Tribute of horses, 135
Troubadours, 175
Tung-tree, the, 234
Two sisters, the, 167
Tyranny and oppression, 163

UNCHIVALROUS China, 211
Unofficial Records of the Southern State, 59

VA-SA-NEH, 134
Vri-ha, 21, 94, 210
Vri-ntee, 182

WAN TAN PING, 136
War dress, Nosu, 222
War whoop, a Nosu, 82
Warfare, Nosu method of, 243
Warning, a, 68
Water-carrying, 101
Weddings, expensive, 232
White Nosu, the, 137, 180
Wilkinson, Sir W. H., 309
Wine, a gift of, 177
Wine and wine cups, 217
Wizards, 93, 180, 189, 246, 313
Wolves, 66, 221
"Woman's Kingdom," the, 223
Women, Chinese and hill, 52
Women's place in China, 211
Wood, scarcity of, 33
Worries of missionary life, 212
Wrestling, 267
Wu Ting Fang, Dr, 53

YANGTSE river, the, 25
Yunnan people, the, 284

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